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THOUGHTS

OF

JEAN-JACQUES ROUSSEAU,

CITIZEN OF GENEVA.

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OF

JEAN-JACQUES ROUSSEAU,

CITIZEN OF GENEVA.

SELECTED FROM HIS WRITINGS

BY AN

ANONYMOUS EDITOR,

AND TRANSLATED BY

Miss HENRIETTA COLEBROOKE.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

446824
18-5-46

LONDON:

Printed for the AUTHOR;

And Sold by J. DEBRETT, Piccadilly; and
R. BALDWIN, Paternoster Row.

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2034
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PREFACE.

IT is univerſally allowed, that, among thoſe writers who have laboured to inſpire a taſte for whatever is lovely, noble, and majeſtic in nature, and to make mankind happy, by making them wiſe and good, Rouſſeau holds a diſtinguiſhed rank.—— Endowed with the utmoſt ſenſibility of temper, and ardour of imagination, and formed, by the ſtudy of philoſophy, for juſtneſs and depth of obſervation, he re-echoes, as it were, in the character of the GENIUS and REPRESENTATIVE of human nature, the impreſſions and ſentiments which all that is moſt intereſting in the natural and moral world is fitted to excite in an enlightened mind. He

ſpeaks

ſpeaks from the heart to the heart: he communicates to his readers, as by an irreſiſtible contagion, that enthuſiaſtic love of nature and virtue which glowed in his own breaſt. The novelty of his own ſentiments excites attention; the boldneſs of his painting fixes them in the memory; and the inimitable dignity and grace of his ſtyle and manner, charm and captivate the awakened ſoul. This great moral teacher traverſes the whole field of duty, and in the moſt familiar and pleaſing manner, inſtructs his readers in all the graces and virtues, as well as all the propriety and decorum of civilized and polite life.

It muſt be confeſſed, at the ſame time, that there are eccentricities and errors in the writings of this exalted genius, equally repugnant to the Chriſtian faith and to ſound ſenſe: and well-diſpoſed minds might,

might, perhaps, doubt whether an indiſcriminate peruſal of all that he has written, might not be followed by dangerous conſequences.

That what is excellent and uſeful might not be loſt, by an intermixture of any thing improper and offenſive, an ingenious Frenchman has made a judicious collection, from the writings of Rouſſeau, of what is beſt adapted to the formation of rational views, ſound moral principles, juſt taſte, and proper manners. It is a Tranſlation of this Collection that is now offered to the Engliſh reader. It was undertaken at the deſire of certain reſpectable judges, who were of opinion, that it would furniſh very agreeable entertainment to all liberal minds, and that it might be uſeful in the education of youth, and, particularly, in that of young ladies.

The

The syſtem of Cheſterfield is here reverſed. For "the *Graces* are the *hand-*"*maids* of *Virtue*, not the *ſovereigns* *," and preſume not to uſurp, but to adorn her throne.

* See Dunbar's Eſſays on the Hiſtory of Mankind.

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CONTENTS TO VOL. I.

	Page
GOD — — — —	1
The Univerſe, the Supreme Intelligence -	6
Atheiſm, Fanaticiſm — —	11
Religion — — — —	13
Goſpel — — —	16
Of Prayer, Devotion, Devotees —	20
Superſtition — — —	23
Conſcience — — —	24
Morality of our Actions — —	26
Moral and Philoſophical Evils —	29
Of Optimiſm — — —	31
Of Paſſions — — —	36
Happineſs — — —	43
Virtue — — —	53
Honour — — —	58
Of Chaſtity, Purity, and Modeſty —	59
Of Piety and Senſibility — —	62
Of the Love of our Country —	67
Of Self-love, and the Love of one's ſelf	70
Of Love — — —	72
Of Lovers — — —	81
Of Friends and Friendſhip — —	84
Of Nature and Habit — —	93
Of Vice — — —	95

Of

Page
Of Ingratitude — — — 98
Of Jealouſy — — 99
Of Vanity — — — 101
Hypocriſy — — — 102
Of Wickedneſs — — 104
Of Characters — — — 106
Coquetry — — — 119
Adverſity, Fate — — 112
Social Inſtitutions — — 115
Nations — — 118
Of Government — — 122
Kings and Kingdoms — — 126
Legiſlators — — 128
Of Laws — — — 131
Of arbitrary Power — — 134
Of Liberty — — — 135
Of Dependence — — 138
Of War — — — 139
Of Finances and Taxes — — 141
Of Luxury — — — 146
Of Riches and rich People — 151
Beggars — — — 153
Of Suicide — — 157
Duels — — — 160
Intoxication — — — 164
Diſeaſes — — — 166
Phyſic and Phyſicians — — 168
Of Life — — — 172

Death

Page
Death — — 175
Study — — — 178
—— of the World — — — 180
Of the Study of the Sciences — 182
Arts and Sciences — — 183
Learned Men — — — 190
Talents — — — 193
Taſte — — — 197
Imagination — — 204
Opinion, Foreſight — — 207
The Senſes — — — 212
Ideas — — — 219
Languages and Accents — — 221
Signs — — — 224

THOUGHTS

THOUGHTS AND MAXIMS.

GOD.

WHATEVER may be thought concerning the eternity, or the creation of matter, whether it poſſeſſes a paſſive principle or no, it is certain that the univerſe compoſes but one whole, and that every thing indicates unity of intelligence and deſign. For I ſee nothing which is not diſpoſed in the ſame ſyſtem, and which does not tend to the ſame end, namely, the preſervation of every thing in its eſtabliſhed order. This being, who has both will and power; this infinite being, call him what you will, who governs the univerſe, and orders all things, I call God. I annex to this name the abſtracted ideas which I have formed of intelligence, power, volition, and goodneſs, which is a neceſſary conſequence of thoſe attributes. But I muſt confeſs that this being, to whom I have aſcribed theſe powers, ſurpaſſes my comprehenſion. He is hid-

den equally from my ſenſes and underſtanding. The more I think, the more I am confounded. I am convinced that he exiſts, and that he exiſts of himſelf. I know that my own exiſtence is ſubordinate to his; and that every thing, of which I have any knowledge, is derived from him. I perceive God every where in his works. I feel him within myſelf. I ſee him around me. Yet, no ſooner would I contemplate him in himſelf; no ſooner would I ſearch where, or what he is, and what is his ſubſtance, than he flies from me, and my bewildered mind entirely loſes ſight of him.

God is intelligent, but how is he ſo? Man is intelligent when he reaſons; but our ſupreme Father has no need to reaſon. He neither makes uſe of premiſes nor conſequences, nor even propoſitions. He is purely intuitive. He ſees at one view whatever is paſt, preſent, or to come. Every truth is to him a only ſingle idea; every place, a ſingle point; and every period, a ſingle moment.

The power of man acts by means; the power of God by itſelf. God can, becauſe he will. His will conſtitutes his power. God is good. Nothing is more manifeſt. The goodneſs of man is the love of his fellow creatures: the goodneſs of God is the love of order. For it is by order only that he ſupports every thing which exiſts, and connects every part, with the whole.

God is juſt. I am convinced of it. This is a conſequence of his goodneſs. The injuſtice of man, is his own work; and not that of the Almighty. The moral diſorder which arraigns providence in the eyes of the philoſophers, is, in mine, a ſtrong proof of its exiſtence. The juſtice of man is, to render to every one what belongs to him; but the juſtice of God requires an account of that which he has given to man. Of all the attributes in the divine nature, that which is the moſt indiſputably neceſſary to a juſt conception of it, is goodneſs. When the ancients called the Supreme Being by the name of Optimus Maximus, they adhered to the truth; but if they had ſtiled him Maximus Optimus, they would have ſpoken with greater propriety, becauſe his goodneſs is derived from his power. He is good, becauſe he is great. Should we attempt to penetrate the fathomleſs abyſs of metaphyſics, we ſhould loſe, in diſputing upon the divine eſſence, that ſhort ſpace of time alotted us to honour him. We are ignorant of his eſſence, although we are certain of his exiſtance. Let this ſuffice us. He makes himſelf viſible in all his works. We even feel him within ourſelves. Although we may diſpute, we can never in good earneſt deny his exiſtence.

The more I endeavour to contemplate, the leſs I conceive of his infinite eſſence. That he exiſts is enough for me to know. The leſs I conceive,

the more I adore him. I humble myſelf, and ſay, "Thou Being of Beings! becauſe thou art, I am. "To meditate inceſſantly on thee, is to elevate my- "ſelf to my origin. To annihilate myſelf in thy "preſence, is the nobleſt uſe I can make of my "reaſon. To feel myſelf overpowered by thy "greatneſs, tranſports and raviſhes my ſoul with "ſupreme delight." Nothing exiſts but by him who is. It is he who gives power to juſtice, a baſis to virtue, and makes that ſhort life valuable which is employed in pleaſing him. It is he who inceſſantly cries to the criminally ſucceſsful, your ſecret crimes have been ſeen. It is he who ſays to the unrewarded meritorious, your virtues have a witneſs. It is he, it is his unalterable ſubſtance, which forms that true model of perfection whoſe image we bear within us. In vain do our paſſions labour inceſſantly to deface it. All his attributes, inſeparable from his eſſence, continually repreſent him to the intellectual eye, and repair, from time to time, ruins of impoſture and error. If you habitually indulge the wiſh that there may be a God, you will never doubt his exiſtence.

If I exerciſe and cultivate my reaſon, if I make a proper uſe of thoſe inherent faculties which God has given me, I ſhall learn of myſelf to love him, to love his works, to wiſh for the accompliſhment of his benevolent intentions; and, in order to pleaſe him, to diſcharge all the duties of this

this mortal condition. What can all human knowledge teach me more?

Thou ſource of juſtice and of truth! Thou merciful and good God! My ſole confidence is in thee! The ſupreme wiſh of my heart is, May thy will be done! According with thy will I co-operate with thy power! I acquieſce in thy goodneſs, and I anticipate that ſupreme happineſs which is its recompence.

The Univerſe, the Supreme Intelligence.

NATURE is a book open to all eyes. In this great and ſublime work I learn to ſerve and to adore its divine author. None are excuſeable, who do not ſtudy it; becauſe it ſpeaks an intelligible language to all men, and to all capacities.

If mere matter ſhew me a will, matter diſpoſed according to certain laws, points out an intelligence. To act, to compare, to chuſe, are the operations of an active and intelligent Being; therefore ſuch a Being actually exiſts. In what do you ſee him exiſt? Not only in the rolling orbs, in the ſparkling ſtars: not only in myſelf, but in the ſheep that grazes, in the bird that flies, in the ſtone that falls, and in the leaf, that is carried about by the wind. Although I be ignorant for what end the world was created, I am not ignorant of its order. It is enough for me to compare its parts; to ſtudy their concurrence and relations: and to obſerve their harmony. I am ignorant why the univerſe exiſts; but I perceive how it is modified. I am like a man when he is firſt ſhewn the machinery of a watch. He is aſtoniſhed at its workmanſhip, though he be ignorant of its uſe, and has not ſeen the dial plate. He would

would ſay within himſelf, although I know not for what purpoſe the whole is conſtructed I can perceive that all its parts correſpond; I admire the workman in the wonderful ſymmetry of his ſyſtem: and I am convinced that all theſe wheels do not thus harmoniouſly move but for a wiſe end, although that end be beyond the power of my weak comprehenſion.

Let us firſt compare the particular ends, the means and the relations appointed to every ſpecies: then liſten to our internal ſentiments. What man in his ſenſes — what unprejudiced eye, does not recognize in the ſenſible order of the univerſe a ſupreme intelligence?—and how many ſophiſms muſt we collect to make us miſbelieve the harmony of beings, and the admirable concurrence of each part for the preſervation of the reſt?

Let infidels talk to me as much as they pleaſe of combinations and chances; they may ſilence, but they cannot convince me. And how will you take from me that involuntary ſentiment which intuitively belies you?

I have read Nieuventit with ſurprize, and almoſt with ſhame. How could this man attempt to write a work upon the wonders of nature to ſhew the wiſdom of its author? His book might have been as big as the world before he would have exhauſted his ſubject. Whenever we attempt to develope the minute parts of nature, the greateſt

wonder eſcapes us, which is, the harmony and correſpondence of the whole ſyſtem. The generation alone of living and organized bodies, is a matter which the human mind endeavours to explore in vain. The unſurmountable Barriers which nature has raiſed between every ſpecies that they ſhould not be confounded together, ſhew her intentions in the cleareſt manner. She has not contented herſelf to eſtabliſh order, but has taken ſuch certain meaſures that nothing can diſturb it.

There is not a being in the univerſe that we may not regard in ſome reſpects as the common center around which all the reſt are placed; ſo that they become reciprocally the relative ends and means of each other. Although the mind be confounded and loſt in this infinity of relations, there is nothing either loſt or confounded in the whole. How great the abſurdity to deduce all this harmony from blind mechaniſm, and the fortuitous movements of inanimate matter? Thoſe who deny the unity of intention, which is conſpicuous in all the parts of this great whole; may run on with their vagaries of abſtraction, their co-ordinations, their general principles, and their emblematic terms, as they pleaſe; yet, it is impoſſible for me to conceive a ſyſtem of beings ſo uniformly arranged without conceiving an intelligence, that directs and regulates them. It is out of my power to believe,

that

that paſſive, dead matter has been able to produce living and thinking ſubſtances, or that a blind fatality, or a fortuitous concourſe of atoms could have produced intelligent and rational beings.

Experience and obſervation have taught us the laws of motion. Theſe laws determine effects, without explaining cauſes. They are not ſufficient to demonſtrate the ſyſtem of the world, and the motion of the univerſe. Deſcartes, with dice, formed the heavens and the earth, but he could not give the firſt motion to theſe dice. He could never put in practice his centrifugal force, without the aid of rotation. Newton found out the laws of attraction; but attraction alone would ſoon reduce the world to a motionleſs maſs. He was, therefore, obliged to join projectile force to this law of attraction, in order to deſcribe the curves of the heavenly bodies. But let Deſcartes tell us by what phyſical law, his vortices are impelled: Let Newton ſhew us the hand that launched forth the planets upon the tangets of their orbits!

The philoſopher who flatters himſelf with the idea of penetrating into the ſecrets of God, preſumes to compare his own knowledge with the divine wiſdom. He approves, he blames, he corrects, he preſcribes laws to nature, and ſets limits to the Deity. Immerſed in his own ideal ſyſtems, he involves himſelf in a thouſand perplexities, while he attempts, in vain, to arrange the machine of

the boundleſs univerſe. The poor huſbandman who ſees the ſun and rain alternately fertilizing his field, admires, praiſes, and hallows the hand from whom he receives theſe bleſſings, without pretending to inveſtigate the means by which he receives them. He ſeeks not to juſtify his ignorance, or his vices by his own incredulity. He neither cenſures, doubts, nor attacks the divinity, or the works of his maſter, to make his own inſufficiency appear the more conſpicuous. The words of the impious Alphonſo the Xth, will never enter into the mind of a common man*. This blaſphemous ſaying was reſerved for the mouth of a philoſopher.

* This king of Caſtile ſaid, that if God had called him to council, when he formed the world, he would have given him ſome good advice. The number of uſeleſs circles which the mathematicians of his time had contrived to explain the celeſtial motions, have perhaps, given occaſion to this impious expreſſion of a prince, who had ſagacity enough to wiſh for that ſimplicity, which has ſince been diſcovered in the mechaniſm of the univerſe.

ATHE-

ATHEISM, FANATICISM.

THE view of nature, ſo lively, and animated in the eyes of all who acknowledge a God, is dead in thoſe of the Atheiſt; and amidſt this univerſal harmony, in which every thing proclaims the Divinity, in ſuch ſweet accents, he alone is ſtruck with nothing but eternal ſilence.

Bayle has very acutely proved that Fanaticiſm is more pernicious than Atheiſm. This is inconteſtable. What he has been very careful, however, not to mention, and what is not leſs true, is, that Fanaticiſm, although ſanguinary and cruel, is ſtill an exalted paſſion, which elevates the heart of man, raiſes him above the fear of death, multiplies his reſources exceedingly, and which only wants to be better directed, to be productive of the moſt ſublime virtues. The argumentative ſpirit of controverſy and philoſophy on the contrary, attaches us to life, enervates and debaſes the ſoul, concentrates all paſſions in the baſeneſs of ſelf-intereſt, and thus gradually ſaps the real foundation of all ſociety; for the views of private intereſt partake ſo little of any thing generous and ſocial, that this could never be put in the balance with what they poſſeſs of a contrary nature.

If Atheiſm ſpill not blood, it is leſs from the love of peace than from indifference to what is good. It is of little conſequence to the pretended ſage how things go, provided he can reſt quietly in his cloſet. His principles do not deſtroy men, but prevent their birth by deſtroying the morals that multiply them, in detaching them from their ſpecies, and in reducing all their affections to a ſecret egotiſm, as fatal to population as to virtue.

Philoſophical indifference is like the tranquillity of a ſtate under deſpotiſm. It is the tranquillity of death, and is even more deſtructive than war itſelf.

RELI-

RELIGION.

OF how many comforts is the man deprived, who has no religion? What ſentiment can comfort him under his misfortunes? What ſecret motive can incite him to do a good action? What voice can ſpeak to him from the bottom of his ſoul? What recompence can he expect from his virtues? How can he face death? The laſt reſource to be employed againſt an unbeliever, is to touch his heart, and to ſhew him an example to incite him, and to render religion ſo amiable that he cannot reſiſt her.

What an argument againſt the unbeliever is the life of a true chriſtian? Where is the man who dares to controvert this? What emotions is the picture not fitted to excite in the chriſtian's heart, when his friends, his children, his wife, all concur to inſtruct and edify him? When, without conſtantly preaching God in their diſcourſe, they always demonſtrate him in the actions which he inſpires; in the virtue of which he is the author; in the pleaſure which they find in pleaſing him. When he ſees the image of heaven ſhine in his houſe. When, once a day he ſhall be conſtrained to lift up his eyes to heaven, and ſay within himſelf, man is not thus himſelf! ſomething more than human reigns here.

A happy

A happy inſtinct leads me to what is good, but the ſame conſtitutional inſtinct ſubjects me to the violence of paſſion. This violence of paſſion ſprings from the ſame root with the ſalutary inſtinct; how ſhall I eradicate it? In meditating on the order of the univerſe, I plainly diſcover the beauty and the goodneſs of virtue, and its ſubſerviency to the public good. But what avail all theſe abſtracted conſiderations when oppoſed to my private intereſt; and which in the end is likely to prevail in the conteſt; my own happineſs at the expence of the reſt of mankind, or the happineſs of others at the expence of mine? If the fear of ſhame or puniſhment prevent me from doing wrong for my own intereſt, I have only to ſin in ſecret: then virtue has nothing to ſay to me; and if I be detected, I ſhall be puniſhed as at Sparta; not for the crime, but for the detection. Let the character and love of what is excellent be imprinted by nature in the bottom of my ſoul, and no time will ever efface her eſtabliſhed precepts.

But how can I always be certain of preſerving, in its purity, that interior image which has no model amongſt ſenſible beings to which it can be compared? Do we not know, that immoderate paſſions corrupt our judgements as well as our inclinations? Do we not know that conſcience is inſenſibly altered and modified in every age, amongſt all people; and that every individual acts according to the inconſtancy

ſtancy and variety of his prejudices? Let us then adore the eternal being, and with one breath we ſhall deſtroy theſe fantoms of reaſon which have only a vain appearance, and fly as a ſhade before the light of immutable truth. The omiſſion of the religious, leads to the neglect of the ſocial duties.

Shun thoſe who, under a pretence of explaining nature, ſow in the hearts of men deſtructive doctrines, of which, apparent ſcepticiſm is at once more affirmative and more dogmatical, than all the decided arguments of their adverſaries. Under the haughty pretence that they alone are truly enlightened, they imperiouſly ſubject us to their powerful deciſions, and pretend to give us for the true principles of things, thoſe unintelligible ſyſtems which they have raiſed in their own imaginations. They not only overturn, deſtroy, and trample under foot, every thing which is dear to mankind, but take from the afflicted the laſt conſolation of their miſeries; from the powerful and rich the only reſtraint of their paſſions; and eradicate from the bottom of every heart the remorſe of crimes, by extinguiſhing the hope of reward for virtuous actions. Yet they ſtill boaſt that they are the benefactors of mankind. Never, never, ſay they, "can "truth be prejudicial to man. I believe it, as well "as they do; and this is in my opinion a great proof "that in what they teach there is no truth.

GOSPEL,

GOSPEL.

THIS divine book, the only one neceſſary to a chriſtian, and the moſt uſeful of all even to him who is not, only wants to be read, to create in the ſoul a love of its author, and a deſire to fulfil his precepts. Never did virtue ſpeak ſo ſoft a language; never did the moſt conſummate wiſdom expreſs itſelf with ſo much enèrgy, and ſimplicity. We never quit the ſtudy of it without better ſentiments than we poſſeſſed before.

The ſublimity of the ſcriptures aſtoniſhes me: the ſanctity of the goſpel ſpeaks to my heart. Read the books of philoſophers with all their pomp; how inſignificant are they to theſe! Is it poſſible that a book at once ſo ſublime and ſo full of wiſdom ſhould be the work of men? Is it poſſible that the ſacred perſonage of whom this hiſtory is written can be human? Is it the cant of an enthuſiaſt or of an ambitious ſectary?

What ſoftneſs, what purity in his manners! What a forcible grace in his inſtruction! What an elevation in his maxims! What profound wiſdom in his diſcourſes! What preſence of mind! How juſt and exact are all his remarks! What government

ment over his paſſions! Where is the man, or where is the philoſopher who knows how to act, how to ſuffer, and how to die, without weakneſs and without oſtentation!

When Plato painted his imaginary juſt man, loaded with all the opprobrium of crimes, and worthy of every good reward of virtue, he exactly paints Jeſus Chriſt: the reſemblance is ſo ſtriking, that all the fathers of the church have perceived it; and that it is impoſſible to miſtake it.

How blinded by prejudices muſt that man be, who dares to compare the ſon of Sophroniſcus to the ſon of Mary! How different is Socrates dying without pain or ignonimy, and ſupporting his character to the laſt? Had not his fortitude and his peaceful dying moments dignified his life, we ſhould doubt whether Socrates with all his ſenſe, was any other than a ſophiſt. It is ſaid that he invented morality; others, however, before him had practiſed it; he only repeated what they had done, and enforced his precepts from their examples. Ariſtides had been juſt before Socrates had explained what juſtice was: Leonidas died for his country, before Socrates had made the love of it a duty. Sparta was ſober before Socrates had praiſed ſobriety; and before he had praiſed virtue, Greece abounded with virtuous men. But from whence did Jeſus draw that elevated and pure morality, of which he has given both precepts and examples?

The

The moſt exalted wiſdom has commanded attention from the breaſt of the moſt furious fanatic; and the ſimplicity of the moſt heroic virtues has adorned the vileſt of men. The death of Socrates, peacefully philoſophiſing with his friends, is the eaſieſt we can wiſh for: That of Jeſus expiring in tortures, buffeted, railed at, and execrated by a whole people, is the moſt horrible we can fear. Socrates taking the poiſoned cup, bleſſes the man who preſents it, weeping; but Jeſus amidſt the moſt excruciating tortures, prays for his bloody and cruel murderers. If the life and death of Socrates is that of a wiſe man; the life and death of Jeſus is that of a God. Shall we ſuppoſe that the hiſtory of the Goſpel was invented by the power of fancy? It wears not the ſemblance of a fiction. And the facts recorded of Socrates, of which no one doubts, are not ſo well atteſted as thoſe of Jeſus Chriſt. This is ſhifting the difficulty without deſtroying it. It would be more inconceivable that ſeveral men had, with one accord, written this book, than that one furniſhed the ſubject of it.

It is not credible that any Jewiſh authors would, of themſelves, have raiſed their ſtrains either to the morality or the ſtile of the ſcriptures. The Goſpel has characters of truth ſo great, ſo ſtriking, and ſo perfectly inimitable, that the inventor of them would be more ſurpriſing than the hero.

Chriſ-

Chriſtianity is, in its principle, a univerſal religion, which has nothing in it excluſive, nor any thing local, and nothing particular to one country more than to another. Its divine author, in his unbounded charity, embracing equally all mankind, came to remove that barrier which ſeparated nations, and re-united men into one people of brothers. For in every nation, he that feareth him, and worketh righteouſneſs, is accepted with him. Such is the true ſpirit of the Goſpel.

I know not why people will attribute the morality of our books to the progreſs of philoſophy. The morality drawn from the Goſpel was chriſtian, before it was philoſophical; the precepts of Plato are often very ſublime, but how much does he not ſometimes err, and to what a height do not his errors ſometimes reach? With regard to Cicero, can any one believe, that without Plato, this rhetorician would have ever compoſed his book of offices?— The Goſpel with regard to its morality, is always ſure, always true, always uniform, and always like to itſelf.

Of Prayer, Devotion, Devotee.—

THE ſoul, in elevating itſelf by devotion to the ſource of ſenſibility and of exiſtence, is eaſed of its thirſt and its languor: By this intercourſe it is renewed, re-animated and invigorated. It imbibes new life, and aſſumes another ſpecies of exiſtence, entirely independent of bodily paſſion, and which is carried, as it were, out of itſelf, and is totally immerſed in that infinite Being, which is the object of its contemplation. Looſened, for a moment, from its fetters, it finds a conſolation in reſuming them, by this view of a happier ſtate which it hopes one day to enjoy. There is no virtue which may not be carried to a blameable exceſs; not even devotion, which is changed into delirium. From whence proceeds the extaſies of the Aſcetics? From prolonging the time given to prayer more than human weakneſs can bear. The ſpirits are exhauſted, the imagination is inflamed, and preſent viſions; they become inſpired prophets; and there is neither ſenſe nor wiſdom which can guard againſt fanaticiſm.

If we abuſe prayer, and become myſtical by trying to elevate, we loſe ourſelves in ſeeking for grace: we renounce reaſon. To obtain one gift from

from Heaven, we relinquiſh another; and by endeavouring to gain light, we loſe that which has already been given us.

It is not ſerving God, to paſs one's life kneeling in an oratory. The only way by which we can render ourſelves acceptable to the Deity is, to fulfil upon earth thoſe duties he has impoſed upon us; and, from a deſire to pleaſe him, to do whatever is ſuitable to the ſtation in which he has placed us.—We muſt firſt do our duty, then pray when we can.

Devotion is an opiate to the ſoul; it enlivens, animates, and ſupports it, when moderate; but when carried to exceſs, lays us aſleep, makes us furious, or deſtroys us.

Devotion muſt not be ſhewn by an affected exterior, and as a ſort of employment, which releaſes us from all others. We muſt alſo refrain from that myſtic and figurative language, which feeds the heart with the chimeras of the imagination, and which ſubſtitutes for the true love of God, ſentiments drawn from terreſtrial love, and which naturally tend to excite it.

The more tender our hearts, and the more lively our imaginations, the more we ought to ſhun every object that is calculated to inflame them. For in ſhort, how can we ſee the relations of the myſtical object, without ſeeing likewiſe the ſenſual? And how dares a virtuous woman reflect on what ſhe would be aſhamed to look at?

We

We keep at a diſtance from profeſſed devotees, on account of that affectation of manners which renders them inſenſible to humanity. It is their exceſſive pride which makes them look on the reſt of the world with pity. If they deign to ſtoop to ſome act of goodneſs, it is in ſo humiliating a manner, they have ſo cruel a way of pitying, their juſtice is ſo rigorous, their charity ſo cold, their zeal ſo bitter, their diſdain ſo near a kin to hatred, that even the inſenſibility of people of the world is leſs barbarous than their commiſeration. The love of God ſerves them as an excuſe for loving nobody: they do not even love one another. Has there ever been any true friendſhip found amongſt falſe devotees? But the more they detatch themſelves from men, the more they require from them; and we may ſay, that they only elevate themſelves to God, to exerciſe his authority upon earth.

SUPER-

SUPERSTITION.

SUPERSTITION is the moſt terrible ſcourge of mankind. It ſtupifies the weak, perſecutes the wiſe, enſlaves nations, and commits every where a thouſand dreadful evils!—What uſe is it of? None. If it ever is, it muſt be to a tyrant: it is his moſt terrible weapon. And this is the greateſt injury it has ever done to mankind.

CONSCIENCE.

CONSCIENCE is the beſt of all caſuiſts; and it is only when we diſpute her deciſions, that we have recourſe to the ſubtilties of reaſoning.—Conſcience is the voice of the ſoul, Paſſion that of the body. Is it ſurprizing, that theſe two languages are often at variance with one another, and that a doubt ſhould ſometimes ariſe to which we ought to liſten? Reaſon too often deceives us, and we have but too well acquired the right of rejecting her.—But Conſcience never miſleads: ſhe is the true guide of man, and is to the ſoul, what inſtinct is to the body. Thoſe who follow her dictates, obey Nature, and need not be afraid of going wrong.

Oh, Conſcience! thou divine inſtinct, thou immortal and heavenly voice! thou aſſured guide of an ignorant and finite being! Thou intelligent and free, thou infallible judge of good and evil, who rendereſt man like unto God, in thee conſiſt the excellence of his nature, and the morality of his actions! Without thee, I feel nothing within myſelf which elevates me above the brute creation, but the mournful privilege of wandering from error to error,

error, impelled by an unregulated underſtanding, and unprincipled reaſon.

If Conſcience ſpeak to all hearts, why are there ſo few who liſten to her? Alas! becauſe ſhe ſpeaks to us the language of Nature, which all things conſpire to deface. Conſcience is timid; ſhe loves retreat and peace; the world and its buſtle terrify her. Our prejudices againſt her dictates, are her moſt cruel enemies; ſhe flies, or is ſilent before them.—Their rude voice ſtifles hers, and prevents her from being heard.

Fanaticiſm dares to counterfeit her nature, and dictate crimes in her name.—She is at laſt diſguſted at being ſo often rejected, ſhe neither ſpeaks to us, nor anſwers us more; and after deſpiſing her ſo long, it coſts us as much to recal, as it did at firſt to baniſh her from our boſoms.

Morality of our Actions.

ALL the morality of our actions conſiſts in the judgement which we make of them ourſelves. If it be true, that good is good, it muſt be ſo even in the bottom of our hearts, as well as when it is diſplayed in our actions; and the firſt reward of virtue, is the conſciouſneſs of having practiſed it.

If moral goodneſs be conformable to our natures, man can neither have a ſound mind, nor be happily conſtituted, but in proportion as he is good. If it be not ſo, and that man is originally bad, he cannot ceaſe to be ſo, without violating his conſtitution; and goodneſs in him, is but a vice againſt nature. Born for the deſtruction of his fellow-men, as the wolf by nature devours his prize, a humane man would be as depraved an animal as a compaſſionate wolf, and virtue would be the only ſource of remorſe.

Laying aſide all private intereſt, let us enter into ourſelves, and examine to what our propenſities incline us; which pleaſes us moſt, the ſufferings or happineſs of others; or which gives us the moſt pleaſure, the performance of a wicked or beneficent action? For whom do you feel your ſelf intereſted upon

upon the theatre? Is it in crimes that you delight, or is it for the punishment of their authors that you shed tears? Every thing, it is alledged, is indifferent to us that is unconnected with our own interest: when, on the contrary, the pleasures of friendship and humanity console us in our troubles, and even in the enjoyment of pleasures we should be too much alone, and too miserable, if we had nobody to share them with us. If there is no such thing in the heart of man, as an original and inherent sentiment of virtue, whence those transports of admiration which are excited by the contemplation of heroic actions? what connection has that virtuous enthusiasm with our private interest? Why would I sooner wish to be Cato piercing his heart, than Cæsar in triumph? Take away from our hearts that love of what is great, and you deprive us of the noblest charm of life.—He, whose passions have stifled in his narrow soul these delicious sentiments; he who continually lives concentrated in himself, and in the end comes to love only himself, he no longer feels any transports; his frozen heart is insensible to any emotions of joy; the tear of pity never more moistens his eyes; he enjoys nothing.—The wretch lost to feeling, is lost to life, and already dead.

Look round upon all the nations of the world, and run over all their histories; among so many inhuman and odd kinds of worship, among that prodigious diversity of character and manners, you

will find every where the ſame ideas of juſtice and honour, every where the ſame notions of good and evil. Ancient paganiſm invented abominable gods, whom we now a-days ſhould puniſh as criminals, and who exhibited no other picture of ſupreme happineſs, than the commiſſion of crimes with impunity, and the complete gratification of their paſſions. But vice, armed with a ſacred authority, deſcended from above in vain: moral inſtinct repulſed it from the hearts of men. In celebrating the debauches of Jupiter, men admired the continence of Xenocrates; the chaſte Lucretia adored a lewd Venus; the intrepid Roman, ſacrificed to fear, invoked the God that maimed his father, and died, without murmuring, by the hand of his own. The moſt miſerable Deities were ſerved by the greateſt men. The holy voice of nature, ſtronger than that of the Gods, made itſelf reſpected upon earth, and ſeemed to baniſh crimes from heaven, with thoſe that committed them.

There is, then, within our ſouls, an innate principle of juſtice and of virtue, from which, in ſpite of the maxims of ſelf-intereſt, we judge of our own actions, and thoſe of others, as good or evil.

Moral and Philoſophical Evils.

IT is the abuſe of our faculties which renders us miſerable and wicked. Our ſorrows, our cares, and our pains, proceed from ourſelves. Moral evil is inconteſtibly our own work; and phyſical ill would give but little pain, but for our vices which make us feel it.

Is it not for our preſervation, that nature makes us feel our wants?—Is not bodily pain a ſymptom that our machine is deranged, and a warning to us to ſee to its preſervation.— — Death!—do not bad men poiſon both their own lives and ours? Who is it that would wiſh to live for ever? Death is a cure for the evils we bring upon ourſelves.

Nature would not ſuffer us to be for ever miſerable. To how few evils is the man ſubject, who continues in his primitive ſimplicity? He lives almoſt without diſeaſe or paſſions, and neither foreſees nor feels death. When he feels its approaches, his miſeries have rendered it deſirable; it is then no longer an evil to him. If we could content ourſelves to remain what we are, we ſhould have no reaſon to deplore our lot. In ſeeking for imaginary happineſs, we bring upon ourſelves a thouſand real

evils. He who knows not how to bear a little pain, muſt expect to ſuffer a great deal. When we have ruined our conſtitutions by an irregular life, we wiſh to re-eſtabliſh it by remedies: to the evil we feel, we add that which we fear—the foreſight of death renders it horrible, and accelerates it. The more we endeavour to fly from it, the more we feel it, and we die with fear during all our lives, murmuring againſt nature, on account of evils which we have brought upon ourſelves by offending her.

Man! ſeek thou no longer the author of evil:—the author of evil is thyſelf. There exiſts no evil but of thy own making, or that thou ſuffereſt, and both originate from thyſelf. General evils can only be cauſed by diſorder; and I ſee in the ſyſtem of the world, an order which never varies. Private evils exiſt only in the ſentiments of the being that ſuffers, and this ſentiment has not been given to man by nature; he has brought it on himſelf.—Pain has but little power on that man, who, unaccuſtomed to reflection, neither recollects the paſt nor anticipates the future. Remove fatal refinements, remove our vices and errors; in ſhort, remove the works of men, and all will be well.

Of OPTIMISM.

WE cannot examine with accuracy the ſyſtem of Optimiſm, without carefully ſeparating private evils (of which no philoſopher has ever denied the exiſtence) from general evils, whoſe exiſtence the optimiſt denies. The point in queſtion, is not to know whether we ſuffer individually, but whether it be beſt, on the whole, that the world ſhould exiſt; and whether the evils we ſuffer, were inevitable in the conſtitution of the univerſe. Thus, the addition of one article would, perhaps, render the propoſition more accurate; and inſtead of ſaying all is good, we had better ſay, the whole is good, or, every thing is good for the whole. It would then be evidently impoſſible for any man to give any direct proof either for or againſt Optimiſm; for thoſe proofs depend totally upon a perfect knowledge of the conſtitution of the world, and the deſign of its author; and this knowledge is far above human intelligence. The true principles of Optimiſm can neither be drawn from the properties of matter, or the mechaniſm of the univerſe, but by an induction of the perfections of God, who preſides over all things: ſo that we do not prove the

exiſtence of God by Pope's ſyſtem; but the ſyſtem of Pope, by the exiſtence of God: and it is the doubt concerning Providence, which gives birth to that concerning the origin of evil.

The reaſon why theſe two queſtions have never been better explained, the one than the other, is, that the arguments concerning Providence have always been weak, and, that the abſurdities made uſe of, have confounded all the concluſions which we might have drawn from this great and comfortable doctrine.

The greateſt enemies to the cauſe of God, are prieſts and devotees, who never will allow that any thing happens according to eſtabliſhed order, but always have recourſe to the interference of Divine juſtice in events purely natural: and in order to aſcertain what they advance, puniſh and chaſtiſe the wicked; try, and recompenſe the good indiſcriminately with rewards or puniſhments, according to the events. I know not, for my part, whether it be found divinity, but I conceive it to be a wrong manner of reaſoning, to found the proofs of the exiſtence of God equally upon the pro and con. and to aſcribe indiſcriminately to him, all that would have equally happened without him.

Philoſophers appear to me juſt as unreaſonable, on the other hand, when I hear them accuſe Heaven, becauſe they are not incapable of either ſuffering or change;

change; and cry, that they are undone when they have the tooth-ach, or when they are poor, or when they are robbed; and charge God, as Seneca ſays, with the care of their portmanteau.

If Cartouch or Cæſar had, by ſome accident, periſhed in their infancy, we might have ſaid—What crimes had they committed? But theſe two robbers have lived, and we ſay, Why were they permitted to live? An enthuſiaſt, on the contrary, would ſay, in the firſt caſe, God, to puniſh the father, took the ſon; and in the ſecond, God preſerved the child, for the chaſtiſement of the people.

Whichever way, therefore, nature acts, Providence is always right with devotees, and always wrong with philoſophers. Perhaps, in the order of human affairs, Providence is neither right nor wrong; becauſe all things are ſubject to one common law, which pays not the ſmalleſt reſpect to any individual.

It is moſt natural to ſuppoſe, that the events which affect individuals here below, are not, in fact, objects of attention to the author of the univerſe; that his providence is ſolely univerſal, and is ſatisfied with preſerving genera and ſpecies, and preſiding over the whole, without troubling itſelf with the manner in which each individual paſſes this ſhort life.

A wiſe king, who wiſhes all his people to live happily in his dominions, has no need to inquire whether the hedge ale-houſes be good. The traveller murmurs one night, if they are bad, and laughs all the reſt of his days at ſo ridiculous an impatience. *Commorandi enim natura diverſorium nobis, non habitandi dedit* *.

In order to think juſtly on this head, we ſhould conſider things relatively in their phyſical, and abſolutely in their moral order; ſo that the greateſt idea I can form of Providence, is, that each material being is diſpoſed in the beſt poſſible order, with relation to the whole; and each intelligent and ſenſible being in the beſt manner with regard to itſelf; which ſignifies, in other terms, that for thoſe who feel their exiſtence, it is better to exiſt than not.—But we muſt apply this rule to the total duration of each ſenſible being, and not to a few tranſitory moments of his duration—ſuch as human life; which ſhews how nearly ſpeculations on the ſubject of Providence are connected with thoſe on the immortality of the ſoul, which I have the happineſs to believe.

If I reduce all theſe different queſtions to their firſt origin, they all appear to me to have a relation

* *For Nature has provided us with an inn to ſtop at, but not with an habitation that is fixed and permanent.*

to

to that of the exiſtence of God. If God exiſts, as it is not poſſible to doubt, he is perfect: if he be perfect, he is wiſe, powerful, and juſt: if he be wiſe and powerful, my ſoul is immortal; if my ſoul be immortal, thirty years of life are nothing to me, and perhaps are neceſſary to the ſupport of the univerſe.

Of PASSIONS.

THE ſource of all our paſſions, the origin and principle of all other principles, the only one which is born with man, and which never leaves him, as long as he lives, is ſelf love; a primitive, inate paſſion, anterior to all others, and of which all others are only modifications. Our underſtanding and paſſions are mutually indebted to each other: it is from the activity of the latter that our reaſon is ripened: we ſeek knowledge only becauſe we hope to derive pleaſure from its attainment. It is not poſſible to conceive why the man, who has neither deſires nor fears, ſhould give himſelf the trouble to reaſon. The paſſions, in their turn, derive their origin from ou ıts, and their progreſs from our underſtandin the For we can neither deſire nor fear any thing, but from the ideas which we may form of it; or from the ſimple impulſe of nature. It is an error to divide the paſſions into thoſe that may be indulged, and thoſe that may not. In order to give ourſelves up to

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the former, and abſtain from the latter—all paſſions are good when we govern them: all are bad when they govern us. Nature forbids us to extend our attachments beyond our ſtrength—What reaſon forbids, is, to wiſh what we cannot obtain. It is impoſſible at all times to avoid temptation: conſcience only commands us never to be overcome by it. It does not depend on us whether we have, or have not, paſſions: but it is our fault if we do not regulate them—Whatever ſentiments are under the control of reaſon are juſtifiable. All thoſe that maſter us are criminal. Great paſſions, when ſatiated, wean us from leſſer ones: that peace of mind which ſucceeds them is the only ſenſation that increaſes by enjoyment. Violent paſſion of every kind, is one of the moſt dangerous ſights that can be ſhewn to children: an exceſſive degree of paſſion has always in it ſomething puerile which amuſes and ſeduces, and which cauſes them to love what they ought to fear—for this reaſon, we are all of us fond of the theatre, and ſome of us of romances.

All great paſſions are formed in ſolitude; we meet with no ſuch thing in the world, where no object has time to make a laſting impreſſion, and where diverſity of taſte weakens the force of ſentiment. Light paſſions are not ſubject to change, and point always to their end; but we may arm ſuch as are great againſt themſelves.

Our

Our manner of seeing and feeling is very different in solitude from what it is in our commerce with the world. There, our passions, differently modified, are vented in different expressions. The imagination, continually viewing the same objects, is affected by them with a stronger impression. This little number of images are constantly recurring, and interfering with all their ideas. Hence arises that odd and unvaried turn of conversation, which we remark in the discourses of people who lead a solitary life. Does it follow from this that their conversation is full of energy? Not at all; it is only singular. It is only by mixing with the world that we learn to express ourselves with energy — first, because it is always necessary to speak differently, and better than others, and that, by continually affirming what we do not believe, and expressing sentiments we do not possess, we endeavour to give a persuasive turn to what we say — in place of natural eloquence, do you believe that people of real feeling possess that strong, energetic, and persuasive manner of speaking, which we admire in the drama, or in French romances? No! passion, full of itself, is rather copious than forcible in its expressions; it does not even endeavour to persuade; it cannot suppose we ever doubt its veracity; when it expresses what it feels, it is less to communicate this to others than to relieve

lieve itſelf. Love is painted in a livelier manner in cities—is it becauſe it is more felt than in cottages?

Read a love letter written by an author in his cloſet, by a wit who wiſhes to ſhine; if he has any ſpirit, his letter will, according to the phraſe, be ready to burn the paper: the heat, however, will go no farther; you will be charmed, even agitated, perhaps, but with tranſient and light emotions, which will leave you in the recollection of nothing but words. On the contrary, a letter that love has really dictated, a letter of a true, paſſionate lover, will be diffuſe, long, wild, and full of repetitions. The heart of the real lover, totally overwhelmed with a ſentiment that overflows, is for ever repeating the ſame thing, and has never done, like a rapid ſtream that runs continually, and is never ſpent. We find no bright ſallies, nothing remarkable: we retain neither words, expreſſions, or phraſes; we admire nothing, we are ſtruck with nothing. But, notwithſtanding this, our ſoul is affected, and we feel ourſelves moved we know not why; if we are not ſtruck by the force of the ſentiment, we are touched by its truth; and it is thus that the heart ſpeaks to the heart; but thoſe who have no feeling, and who poſſeſs only the decorated jargon of the paſſions, know nothing of that ſort of beauties, and deſpiſe them.

Enthu-

Enthuſiaſm is the ſummit of paſſion; when it has once reached its height, its object appears perfect, and becomes an idol placed in heaven.

We do not write letters to the object of our love and admiration; we addreſs it in hymns. Great paſſions are never found amongſt weak men.

When paſſions once get poſſeſſion of the heart, we grow weary of life.

While the paſſions rule, they contribute to ſupport the torments they give; they unite hope with deſire—we can diſpenſe with preſent happineſs, ſo long as we hope to become happy in future. Hope ſtill grows, even if we never attain its object, and the charm of illuſion is as laſting as the paſſion from which it ſprings; therefore this ſtate ſupports itſelf, and the uneaſineſs which it cauſes is a ſort of enjoyment which ſupplies the place of the reality. We ſtifle great paſſions, but ſeldom refine them. The only way to controul the paſſions, is, to ſubdue one paſſion by indulging another. It is by means of their power thatwe muſt combat their tyranny; and it is from nature herſelf that we muſt receive the weapons proper to regulate her.

In order to obey the ſoul, the body muſt be vigorous. A good ſervant muſt be robuſt. I know, that intemperance excites the paſſions: it alſo, in the long run, emaciates the body: faſting and mortification

tification often produce the ſame effect by a quite oppoſite cauſe. The feebler the body is, the more it commands; the ſtronger, the eaſier it obeys: all ſenſual paſſions reſide in effeminate bodies; they are the more irritable, the leſs they are able of gratification.

How credulous do our paſſions render us, and how difficult is it for a heart infected, to renounce even thoſe errors that it perceives!

We may become old in a few years, and acquire a great deal of experience to our coſt: the paſſions may thus be ſaid to lead the way to philoſophy.

The paſſions, in which we participate, ſeduce us; we revolt from thoſe that ſhock our intereſt, and, by a ſtrange paralogiſm produced by their influence, we blame in others what we would wiſh to imitate.

Senſibility is the ſource of all our paſſions; imagination fixes their tendency; every being who feels his relations ought to be affected when thoſe relations change, and when he imagines, or thinks, that there are others more conſonant to his nature. The errors of imagination transform the paſſions of every limited being into vices, even thoſe of angels, if they have any; for it would be requiſite for them to know the nature of every being, in order to judge what relations are moſt ſuitable to theirs.

There

There is the ſummary of all human wiſdom in the uſe of the paſſions—Firſt, to apprehend the true relations of men, as well in the ſpecies as the individual; and, ſecondly, to direct all the affections of the ſoul according to their different relations.

HAPPINESS.

WE are ignorant of entire happineſs, or miſery. Every thing in this life is mixt; we taſte no happineſs without alloy; we never reſt two minutes in the ſame ſtate. The affections of our ſouls, as well as the modifications of our bodies, are in a continual fluctuation: good and evil is common to us all, but in different proportions. The happieſt man is he who ſuffers the feweſt pains; the moſt miſerable he who enjoys the feweſt pleaſures. The proportion of evils allotted to man, exceeds that of their enjoyments; and this diſproportion holds throughout the whole world. Human felicity then is only negative, and ought to be eſtimated by the ſmalleſt quantity of ſuffering.

All painful ſenſations are accompanied by a deſire of being freed from them; all ideas of pleaſure are accompanied by a deſire of prolonging their enjoyment; all deſires imply privations, and all the privations with which we are acquainted are painful —it is then in the diſproportion of our faculties and our deſires, that our miſeries conſiſt. A ſenſible being whoſe faculties equalled his deſires, would be a being abſolutely happy.

In

In what then conſiſts human wiſdom, or where is the road to real happineſs? it is not entirely in retrenching our deſires, for if they were below our ſtrength, a part of our faculties would remain inactive, and we ſhould not enjoy all our being—— neither is it in extending our faculties, for if our deſires were extended to their utmoſt limits, we ſhould only become more miſerable. But it is in moderating the exceſs of thoſe deſires that are beyond our faculties—and in perfectly equalizing the power and will; it is then alone, when all our forces are in action, and the ſoul is in a ſtate of tranquillity, that man is under juſt regulation.

This is the original inſtitution of nature that orders all things for the beſt. She gave for the uſe of man in a direct manner, ſuch deſires only as are neceſſary for his preſervation—and ſuch faculties as are ſufficient for gratifying them. She has placed all others as in reſerve in the bottom of his ſoul, to be expanded according to circumſtances.

It is only in this ſtate of nature that the equilibrium of power and deſire is preſerved, and that man is not miſerable. No ſooner do thoſe ſecondary and virtual faculties appear in action, than imagination, the moſt active of them all, is rouzed and out-tops them.

It is imagination that extends to man the bounds of poſſibilities, whether good or evil, and which conſequently excites, and feeds our deſires, by the hope

hope of satisfying them. But the object which appeared, at first, near attainment, flies from us faster than we are able to pursue it. When we suppose ourselves on the point of attaining it, it changes its appearance; eludes our grasp, and still retreats as we advance. When we lose sight of a country which we have travelled over, we forget it, while that which remains to be traversed, is continually enlarging and extending itself; thus we exhaust our strength without arriving at the end of our journey—and the more we gratify our desires, the farther happiness flies from us. On the contrary, the more a man remains in his primitive state, the less is the difference between his faculties and his desires, and the smaller, of course, his distance from happiness. He is never less miserable than when he seems divested of every thing—for misery does not consist in the privations of things, but in the pain which we suffer in wanting them.

Real existence has its bounds. What is ideal is infinite. Since we cannot extend the one let us reduce the other—for it is from the difference between these alone, that all those evils arise, which render us truly miserable.

Take away health, strength, and the testimony of a good conscience; and all the blessings of this life exist merely in opinion—take away bodily ailment and the stings of conscience, and every other ill is imaginary.

All

All animals have faculties exactly neceſſary for their preſervation—Man alone is endowed with ſome that are ſuperfluous. Is it not wonderful that this ſuperfluity ſhould be the inſtrument of his miſery—In all countries the human arm is able to conquer and effect more than is neceſſary for human ſubſiſtance. If he were wiſe enough to ſet no value on what is ſuperfluous, he would always have what was neceſſary, becauſe he would never have any too much.

Our greateſt wants, ſaid Favorinus, ariſe from great riches; and the beſt way often of ſupplying them, is the diminiſhing our poſſeſſions; we make ourſelves miſerable, by continually endeavouring to increaſe our happineſs. Any man who ſhould only wiſh to live, would live happy—he would conſequently live virtuouſly, for what advantage would he then find in being wicked?—

The trueſt indication of a truly contented mind, is a retired and domeſtic life, and we may be aſſured, that thoſe who are continually rambling abroad in ſearch of happineſs, never find it at home.

We judge too much of happineſs from appearances; we look for it where it ſeldom exiſts; and ſeek it where it cannot be found.—Mirth is but a very equivocal ſign of it; a gay man is but too often an unhappy being, who ſeeks to level others to his own condition, and to forget himſelf.

Thoſe people who appear ſo lively, ſo unconſtrained,

ſtrained, ſo much at their eaſe in company, are almoſt all ſad and ill-humoured at home, and their ſervants pay dear for the amuſements which they afford to ſociety.

Real happineſs is neither gay nor ſportive. Jealous of ſo agreeable a feeling, while we taſte we wiſh to think on it, we love to enjoy, and are fearful of loſing it. A truly happy man, ſpeaks and laughs little, he winds happineſs around his heart. Noiſy amuſements and turbulent joys, throw a veil over diſguſt and wearineſs. But melancholy is the friend of pleaſure, tears and melting ſoftneſs accompany the moſt refined enjoyments, and exceſſive joy ſooner cauſes tears than laughter.

If a great variety of amuſements ſeem at firſt to contribute to happineſs, if the uniformity of a retired life ſeems at firſt tireſome, when we view it nearer, we find, on the contrary, that the moſt pleaſing habit of the ſoul conſiſts in moderate enjoyments, which leaves but little either to deſire or to diſguſt—The reſtleſſneſs of deſires produce curioſity and inconſtancy. The void which turbulent pleaſures leave, produces wearineſs.

We may enjoy pleaſure when we really wiſh it. It is opinion alone which renders every thing difficult, and which drives happineſs from before us. It is far eaſier to be happy than to ſeem ſo.

There is not a ſurer path through which we can arrive at happineſs, than that of virtue; if we reach

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it by her means, she renders it more pure, more solid, and satisfactory. If we miss it, she alone can make us amends.

How little do those men reflect who multiply so indiscreetly their pains by voluptuousness.—They annihilate their existence (if we may be allowed such an expression) by extending it over the face of the earth; and aggravate the weight of their chains by the number of their attachments. Not a pleasure do they enjoy, but involves in its train a thousand bitter privations; the more they feel, the more they suffer; and the more they plunge themselves into life, the more are they sunk in calamities. Every thing that depends on sense, and which is not necessary to life, changes its nature whenever it becomes a habit; when it becomes absolutely necessary it is no longer a pleasure. It is at once to bind ourselves with a voluntary chain, and submit to the pain of being deprived of a pleasure.

To be continually anticipating our desires, is not the way to satisfy but to extinguish them. There is a nobler object which we ought to have in view, which is to remain master of ourselves, to accustom our passions to obedience, and to regulate all our desires.

This is a new method of being happy; for we enjoy nothing without anxiety, which we cannot lose without pain; and if real happiness belong to a

wise

wife man, it is becauſe he is proof againſt all the attacks of fortune.

All conquerors have not been killed; all uſurpers have not miſcarried in their enterpriſes; many appear happy to a mind prepoſſeſſed with vulgar prejudices; but he who without regarding appearances only, judges men by the ſtate of their hearts, will behold their miſery, even in their ſucceſs; he will ſee their deſires and corroding cares extend and increaſe with their fortune: he will ſee them loſing breath as they advance in their career, without ever arriving at the end of their ambition. They will appear to him, like thoſe unexperienced travellers, who having entered for the firſt time on a journey through the Alps, think that every mountain is the laſt, but when they reach the top, are diſcouraged to find higher mountains ſtill before them. He who could accompliſh every thing without being God, would be a miſerable being; he would be deprived of the pleaſure of wiſhing,—any other privation would be more ſupportable: from whence it follows, that every prince who aſpires at deſpotiſm, aſpires to the honour of dying from the languor of inoccupation. If you ſearch every kingdom of the world, for the man the moſt weary in it, go always firſt to the ſovereign, eſpecially if he be abſolute. It is well worth while to make ſo many unhappy beings! Could he not find means of ſubjecting himſelf to the miſery of languor at a leſs expence.

Beggars are miſerable, becauſe they are always beggars. Kings, becauſe they are always kings. The middling conditions of life, which paſs more eaſily into one another, offer enjoyments within the ſphere of its power: they extend alſo the knowledge of thoſe who fill them by diſcovering more prejudices, and more points of compariſon; this appears to me the chief reaſon why we generally find the wiſeſt and beſt men in a middling ſtation of life.

So long as we are ignorant of what we ought to do, it is moſt wiſe to remain inactive—This is, of all maxims, that which is the moſt neceſſary to man, and that which he knows the leaſt how to follow. To ſeek for happineſs without knowing where to find it, is incurring the hazard of going farther from it; it is running as many contrary riſks as there are roads to miſlead us; but it is not every man who knows how to remain inactive.

In our ardent reſearches after happineſs, we had rather run the riſk of being miſled in its purſuit, than to ſit ſtill without purſuing it; and when we once have departed from the place where we might have found it, we never know how to return to it.

The ſource of happineſs lies not entirely either in the object deſired, or in the heart which poſſeſs it, but in the affinity of the one to the other; and as all objects cannot produce felicity, neither is the heart always in a ſtate to enjoy it.—If the pureſt ſoul, or the beſt conſcience, be not ſufficient to its own happineſs,

pineſs, it is ſtill more certain, that all the pleaſures of the earth could not make a depraved heart happy: for there is on both ſides a certain preparation neceſſary, and an happy concurrence, from whence this precious ſentiment, ſo eagerly ſought after by every wiſe mortal, reſults; and of which pretenders to philoſophy are always ignorant, becauſe they are always purſuing the pleaſures of the moment, from their not knowing any ſubject of permanent felicity.

Man, if thou wouldſt wiſh to live wiſe and happy, attach thy heart only to beauty that never fades, let thy condition ſet bounds to thy deſires, let thy duty precede thy inclinations, extend the law of neceſſity to that of morality, learn to loſe what may be taken from you, learn to quit every thing when virtue requires it, to place yourſelf above contingencies, to wean your heart from whatever it holds moſt dear, without breaking it; to have fortitude in adverſity that you may never be miſerable; to be ſteady in your duty that you may never be criminal. You will thus be happy in ſpite of fortune, and wiſe in ſpite of paſſion; you will then find a pleaſure in the poſſeſſion even of tranſient bleſſings, which nothing can diſturb, for you will poſſeſs them, without their poſſeſſing you. And you will feel that the man from whom every happineſs flies, enjoys only what he knows how to loſe—You will not, it is true, be

deluded with imaginary pleaſures; neither will you feel the pains which are the fruits of them. By this exchange, you will be a greater gainer, for the pains of the imagination are frequent and real, but its pleaſures few and unſatisfactory; when you have conquered ſo many falſe opinions, you will alſo ſubdue thoſe which give ſo great a charm to life—You will paſs yours without pain, or miſery, and end it without fear.—You will detach yourſelf, as it were, from every thing. Let others, ſeized with horror, ſuppoſe, that when they quit this life their exiſtence is at an end. Senſible of your dependance on God, you will be convinced that yours is only in its dawn—Death ends the life of the wicked, but begins that of the juſt.

VIRTUE.

THE word Virtue is derived from Fortitude---Fortitude is the baſis of every virtue.

That man is virtuous, who knows how to conquer his affections.

Virtue belongs only to a being of a weak nature and ſtrong paſſions. Therein conſiſts the merit of a juſt man.

The practice of great virtues elevates and feeds genius.

The exerciſe of the ſocial virtues deeply impreſſes on our hearts the love of humanity. For it is in doing good, that we become good. I know not a better way.

Souls of a certain ſtamp transform others into themſelves: there is in the ſphere of their action an influence that is irreſiſtible. We cannot contemplate, without feeling a wiſh to imitate them; and they attract, from their ſublime elevation, all that environs them.

It is not ſo eaſy to renounce Virtue as we imagine. She torments for a long time thoſe who forſake her; and her charms, which are the chief delight of pure

ſouls, are the greateſt torments of the wicked, who ſtill love, but can no longer enjoy them.

Virtue is ſo neceſſary to our hearts, that when we have once abandoned the true, we ſubſtitute a kind of virtue of our own making; and we are more ſtrongly attached to it, perhaps that it is of our own choice.

If the ſacrifices we make to Virtue are ſometimes painful, yet the recollection of them is always pleaſing; and there never was an inſtance of any one's repenting of a good action.

A heart once corrupted, remains ſo for ever, and never returns to virtue of itſelf; unleſs ſome unexpected revolution, ſome ſudden change of fortune and ſituation alters at once its affinities, and forces it to reſume its former ſtate; all its habits being overcome, and all its paſſions modified in the general overthrow, it reſumes its primitive character, and becomes like another being, recently come out of the hands of nature.

Then the recollection of our former meanneſs may ſerve to preſerve us from relapſe. Yeſterday, we were abject and feeble; to-day, we are ſtrong and magnanimous. When we conſider ourſelves in two ſuch different points of view, we feel more ſenſibly the value of that which we have recovered, and we become more attentive to ſuſtain that character which becomes it.

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The enjoyment of Virtue is wholly internal, and is only perceived by thoſe who feel it. But all the advantages of vice ſtrike the eyes of mankind, and it is only the man who poſſeſſes, that knows how dearly he pays for them. It is, perhaps, from this circumſtance, that the miſtaken judgement of mankind ariſe concerning the advantages of Vice and thoſe of Virtue.

It is only perſons of ſtrong minds who know how to fight and conquer. All great exertions, all ſublime actions, have their origin in this mental energy. Cool reaſon never performed any thing illuſtrious; and we never overcome our paſſions, but by oppoſing them to one another. When emotions of Virtue ariſe, they predominate, and keep all in equilibrium. It is thus that a truly wiſe man regulates himſelf: although he be not more ſecure from paſſions than the reſt of mankind, he alone knows how to make them overcome each other, as a good pilot ſteers his ſhip ſafe through contrary winds.

Virtue is a ſtate of warfare, and to live in it we muſt be continually at war with ourſelves. If life be ſhort for pleaſure, it is nevertheleſs long for virtue; to whoſe commands we ſhould pay conſtant attention.

The moment of enjoyment ſlips away, and returns no more; that of doing evil paſſes, and inceſ-

fantly returns. If we forget ourſelves for a moment, we are loſt for ever.

A falſe ſhame, and the fear of reproach, inſpire more bad than good actions. Virtue never bluſhes but at what is really evil.

There are men who pique themſelves on philoſophy, and think they are virtuous by rule, while they are only ſo by conſtitution; and the ſtoick varniſh with which they cover their actions, conſiſts only in decorating with fine arguments, that part which their own hearts made them chooſe.

Whoever is more attached to life than to his duties, cannot be truly virtuous.

The good man ſupports with pleaſure the pleaſant burden of a life uſeful to his fellow-creatures: he feels what the vain wiſdom of the vicious has never been able to believe, that there is a recompence beyond this world for the friends alone of virtue.

It is better to derogate from nobility than Virtue; and the wife of a tinker is more reſpectable, than the miſtreſs of a prince.

It has been ſaid, that there never was a man who appeared a hero to his own valet de chambre. That may be; but the juſt man poſſeſſes the eſteem of his valet: which is a plain proof, that heroiſm is only a deceitful appearance, and that there is nothing ſolid but virtue.

Inconceivable charm of beauty, that never fades! It is not the vicious, who attain honours, and revel

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in the bosom of pleasure, that we envy; but the virtuous, who are unfortunate. For we feel in the bottom of our hearts the real happiness which is concealed under their apparent misfortunes. This is a sentiment known to all men, and often in spite of themselves. This divine model, which we all carry in our own breasts, though not of our own creation or choice, charms us all. When passion allows us to contemplate, we feel a desire to be like it; and if the worst of mankind could be different from what he is, he would wish to become a good man.

Private virtues are often the more sublime, that they do not aspire to the applause of mankind, but are satisfied with the good testimony of themselves; and the conscience of the just man is equivalent to the praise of the whole universe. Felicity is the fortune of the wise, and there is no happiness without Virtue.

HONOUR.

WE may diſtinguiſh in what is called Honour, that which depends on public opinion, and that which is derived from ſelf-eſteem.

The firſt conſiſts of vain prejudices, more fluctuating than an agitated water. The ſecond has its foundation in the eternal truths of morality. Worldly honours may be advantageous to our fortune, but they never reach the ſoul, and have no influence on our real happineſs. True Honour, on the contrary, forms the eſſence of happineſs; becauſe it is in that alone we find thoſe permanent ſenſations of an interior ſatisfaction which alone can render a thinking being happy.

Of Chaſtity, Purity, and Modeſty.

CHASTITY muſt be a delightful virtue for a fine woman, who poſſeſſes any elevation of mind.—While ſhe enjoys the applauſe of all mankind, ſhe triumphs over all, and over herſelf. She erects a throne in her own heart, to which every one comes to pay homage. The tender or the jealous, but always reſpectful ſentiments of both ſexes, the eſteem of the world, and of herſelf, for ever repay her, in tributes of glory, the combats of a few minutes.—Voluntary privations are temporary, but theſe rewards are permanent.

What a pleaſure to a great mind is the pride of virtue, joined to beauty!—Figure to yourſelf an heroine of romance: ſhe will enjoy more exquiſite pleaſure than your Laiſſès or Cleopatras; and when her beauty is faded, her glory and pleaſures will remain: ſhe alone will know how to enjoy the paſt.

Purity is its own ſupport: deſires that are always repreſſed, ſpring at length no more, and temptations are only multiplied by the habit of yielding under them.

Greatneſs of ſoul, which produces every virtue, is ſupported by Purity, which nouriſhes them all.

We ſhould deſpiſe nothing, which contributes to ſupport Purity: it is little precautions which preſerve great virtues.

Deſires, veiled by ſhame, become only more ſeducing: Modeſty, in endeavouring to ſtifle, inflames them. Its fears, its evaſions, its reſerve, its timid confeſſions, its tender and artleſs cunning, ſooner diſcover what it thinks to conceal, than paſſion would without it. It is Modeſty which renders favours valuable, and refuſals ſupportable.

True love really poſſeſſes what Modeſty alone diſputes—this mixture of weakneſs and Modeſty renders it more affecting and more tender. The fewer favours are granted, the more the value is inhanced of thoſe that are obtained; and this is the reaſon that love enjoys both its privations and pleaſures.

Vice endeavours in vain to conceal itſelf: it ſtamps a mark on the guilty brow. Boldneſs is a ſure mark of a woman's guilt: it is becauſe ſhe has too much to bluſh at, that ſhe never bluſhes—and if Modeſty does ſometimes ſurvive Chaſtity, what muſt we think of Chaſtity, when Modeſty itſelf is baniſhed?

Sweet Modeſty! thou ſupreme pleaſure of love! how many charms a woman loſes, when ſhe renounces

nounces thee! If ſhe knew the extent of thine empire, what pains ſhe would take to preſerve thee—if not from motives of honour, at leaſt from thoſe of coquetry. But there is no counterfeiting Modeſty—there is no artifice more ridiculous than that which attempts it.

Of Pity and Senſibility.

PITY is a virtue as univerſal, and as uſeful to man, as it is antecedent to the exerciſe of all reflection, and ſo natural, that even animals often give evident proofs of it. We are pleaſed, when we ſee the author of the Fable of the Bees forced to acknowledge, that man is naturally full of compaſſion and ſenſibility; changing his ſubtle and cold ſtyle, and preſenting the pathetic image of a man in confinement, who perceives on the outſide of his priſon a ferocious animal, tearing an infant from the breaſt of its mother, devouring with its murderous tooth its feeble limbs, and tearing its panting entrails with its claws. How dreadful the feelings and agitations of the man who witneſſes ſuch a ſcene of horror, though he may have no perſonal intereſt in it! Yet, how much he muſt ſuffer, when he finds himſelf unable to afford any ſuccour to the fainting mother, or expiring child!

Mandeville has very forcibly felt, that with all their morality, men would never have been any thing but monſters, if nature had not endowed them with humanity to ſupport reaſon. But he has not perceived, that all thoſe ſocial virtues whoſe exiſtence

exiſtence he diſputes, are derived from this quality alone. For, in fact, what is generoſity, clemency, humanity, but pity towards the feeble, the culpable, or to the human ſpecies in general. Even benevolence and friendſhip are the effects of a conſtant pity, fixed upon one particular object; for, to wiſh a perſon to be exempt from ſuffering, is no more than wiſhing them to be happy.

The pity which we feel for the misfortunes of another, is not proportioned to the greatneſs of his ſufferings, but to the feelings which we have for him who ſuffers.

We only pity an unfortunate man, in proportion as we think his caſe requires it. It is thus that we become hardened to the fate of men—and that the rich reconcile to their conſcience the miſeries which they bring upon the poor, by ſuppoſing them ſtupid enough not to feel them. In general, we may judge how much a man values the happineſs of his fellow-creatures, by the eſteem which he ſeems to have for them. It is natural to be indifferent about the happineſs of thoſe people we deſpiſe. It is not natural for man to fancy himſelf in the place of thoſe who are happier than himſelf, but only in that of thoſe who are more to be pitied.

We never feel for thoſe misfortunes, from which we fancy ourſelves ſecure.

Non

Non ignora mali miseris succurrere disco *.

I know nothing so beautiful, so sublime, so affecting, and so true, as this verse. In fact, why have Kings no pity for their subjects? It is because they suppose that they never shall be subjected to the lot of humanity. Why have the rich so little feeling for the poor? It is because they are not afraid of becoming *poor* themselves. Why have the nobility so great a contempt for the vulgar? It is because a nobleman will never become a plebeian — Why are the Turks in general more hospitable than we are? It is because their government, which is altogether arbitrary, renders the fortunes of individuals always precarious. They do not look on humiliation and misery as a state to which they may always be strangers; every one may be to-morrow in the same situation as the person he relieves to-day.

In order to have a proper commiseration for the misfortunes of others, we must know what misfortunes are, without enduring them.

When we have suffered, or are apprehensive of suffering, we pity the distresses of others; but while we suffer, we only pity ourselves. Therefore, as every man is subject to the calamities of life, no man bestows any more pity on another than what

* I know what misfortunes are, and have learnt to pity the unfortunate.

he

he is not in want of himself. It naturally follows, that commiseration must be a very agreeable sentiment, since it is a sign that we are not very miserable; and on the contrary, an unfeeling man is always unhappy, since the state of his heart leaves him no superabundant sensibility to bestow on the miseries of others.

Although compassion be the first relative or social affection of the human heart, every man is not equally endowed with it. The different impressions by which it is excited have their modifications, and their degrees, and these depend on the particular character and habits of each individual. There are feelings that are not general, and that belong only to souls of real sensibility; such as those which arise from moral sufferings, from internal anguish, languor, and melancholy.

There are people who are only affected by cries and tears: never did the secret moans of a heart, overwhelmed with distress, draw from them a sigh; never did the aspect of a dejected countenance, of a pale and wan complexion, or of a dim eye, which had wept its last tear, draw any tears from theirs. The pains of the mind appear in them as nothing: they form an estimate of them by their own minds, which feel no pain. We must expect nothing from them but inflexible rigour, hardness of heart, and cruelty. They may be upright and just, but never merciful, generous, and compassionate. I say, they may be upright,

upright, if a man can be ſo, when he is not merciful.

Pity is an agreeable ſentiment; becauſe, by changing places with thoſe who ſuffer, we feel the pleaſure of not ſuffering like them.

Envy is a diſagreeable ſentiment; for the contemplation of a happy being, far from putting the envious man in his place, leaves him only the regret of not being in it. The firſt ſeems to exempt us from his miſeries, and the latter to exclude us from his enjoyments.

To prevent pity from degenerating into weakneſs, we muſt make it general, and extend it to all mankind. We ſhall then only yield to that degree which is conſonant with juſtice; becauſe, of all virtues, juſtice is that which contributes the moſt to the general good of mankind. Both from reaſon and ſelf-love, we muſt pity mankind more than our neighbours; and it is a great cruelty towards man, to pity the wicked.

Of the Love of our Country.

THE greateſt miracles of virtue have been produced by the love of our country. This lively and agreeable ſentiment unites the force of ſelf-love, to the full ſplendour of virtue, and gives it an energy which, without diſfiguring, renders it the moſt heroic of all paſſions. It is this which has produced ſo many immortal actions, whoſe luſtre dazzles our feeble ſight, and which has made ſo many great men, whoſe primitive virtues appear, now that the love of our country is derided, as fables. But why ſhould this ſurpriſe us? the tranſports of tender hearts appear chimeras to thoſe who have never felt them; and the love of our country, which is a thouſand times more agreeable than that we feel for a miſtreſs, can only be conceived by thoſe who have felt it; but it is eaſy to obſerve, in all the hearts which it animates, and in all the actions which it inſpires, an ardent and ſublime effuſion, which the pureſt virtue cannot kindle without it. Let us venture to compare Socrates to Cato: the firſt was more a philoſopher, the other a citizen. Athens was already loſt, and

Socrates

Socrates had no other country than the wide world: but Cato carried his in the bottom of his heart; he lived for his country alone, and could not ſurvive it. The virtue of Socrates is that of the wiſeſt of men. But Cato put in compariſon with Cæſar and Pompey ſeemed a god amongſt men. One inſtructed a few individuals, oppoſed ſophiſts, and fell a victim to truth; the other defended the ſtate, its liberties, and laws, againſt the conquerors of the world, and quitted the earth, when he had no country left to ſerve.

A worthy pupil of Socrates would be the moſt virtuous of his cotemporaries,; a worthy Emulator of Cato would be the greateſt. The firſt would find his happineſs in his own virtue; the ſecond would ſeek his in that of all mankind. We ſhould be inſtructed by the one, and led by the other; and this is ſufficient to decide to which the preference is due: for it is impoſſible to make a whole nation of philoſophers, but it is not impoſſible to make a whole people happy.

If we wiſh to make a people virtuous, we muſt begin by inſpiring them with the love of their country. But how ſhould they love it, if their country does not diſtinguiſh them from ſtrangers, and only grants them thoſe privileges it can withhold from no one.

It would be ſtill worſe if they did not derive any ſecurity from civil laws, and that their property, their

their lives, and their liberties, were left to the diſcretion of men in power, without their daring to have recourſe to the laws. Thus ſubmiſſive to the duties of the civil power, and deprived of the rights of the ſtate of nature, and prevented from employing their ſtrength in their own defence, they would find themſelves in the worſt ſituation it is poſſible for a free being to be in, and the word country to them could only have an odious or ridiculous ſignification.

Of

Of Self Love, and the Love of One's Self.

WE muſt not confound ſelf love, with the love of one's ſelf; for they are two paſſions that differ very much in their nature and effects. The love of one's ſelf is a natural ſentiment which induces every animal to take care of its own preſervation, and which, when directed in man by reaſon, and modified by pity, produces humanity and virtue. Self love is only a relative and factitious ſentiment produced in ſociety, and which prompts every one to ſet a higher value upon himſelf than on any other perſon, which is the ſource of all thoſe calamities which men inflict on each other, and which is at the ſame time the true ſource of honour.—The worſt of mankind is he who is the moſt ſolitary, and who moſt confines his heart within his own breaſt: the beſt, on the other hand, is the man, who participates equally in the affections of all his fellows. It is much better to love a miſtreſs, than to be in love with one's ſelf, and with one's ſelf only. But whoever tenderly loves his relations, his friends, his country, and mankind in general,

general, defcends from the noble propriety of fo well-regulated a difpofition, when he gives way to a diforderly attachment, which muft often interfere with the happinefs of the whole world befides, and to which it is preferred.

The love of felf, which has refpect to ourfelves only, is fully gratified, when all our natural wants are fatisfied. But felf love, which is always making comparifons, neither is, nor can be content, becaufe this principle, while it prefers us to others, neceffarily requires alfo that others prefer themfelves to us; contradictions which it is impoffible to reconcile. We fee then the manner in which the foft and humane paffions fpring from the love of felf, and how the hateful and angry paffions fpring from felf love.

Thus it appears, that what renders a man eflentially good is to have few wants, and to make few comparifons of one's felf with others. The eflence of wickednefs, on the other hand, is, to have many wants, and to refer little to opinion.

The precepts of the law of nature are not founded on reafon alone; they have a wifer and more folid bafe. The love of mankind, drawn from the love of ourfelves, is the fource of human juftice.

Of LOVE.

We may diſtinguiſh in the ſentiment of love ſomething moral and ſomething phyſical. Phyſical love is that general deſire which induces one ſex to unite itſelf to the other. Moral love is what determines that ſentiment, and fixes it excluſively upon a ſingle object, or which at leaſt carries it towards the object which it prefers with a greater degree of energy. It is therefore eaſy to perceive that moral love is a factitious ſentiment, which has its origin in ſocial life, and which has been celebrated by the women with a great deal of art and care, in order to eſtabliſh their empire, and to give dominion to that ſex which ought to obey. We are more in love with the creation of our imagination than that to which we turn our attention. If we could ſee the object of our love exactly as it is, love would be baniſhed from the earth. When we ceaſe to love, the perſon we loved remains the ſame as before, but no longer appears ſo to us. The veil of illuſion falls, and love vaniſhes.

The firſt pleaſures of love are always myſterious; modeſty heightens and conceals them. Our firſt

firſt miſtreſs does not make us bold, but timid. Totally abſorbed in a ſtate ſo new, the young man retreats to taſte, and trembles at the thoughts of loſing it. If he be clamorous, he is neither paſſionate nor tender, and while he boaſts he does not enjoy.

True love is the chaſteſt of all ties; its divine fire refines all our natural inclinations, by centering them in a ſingle object; it ſhields us from temptations, and, if we except this ſingle object, both ſexes are indifferent to each other.

All men are alike to a woman who is not in love; but to her who loves, there is no man but her lover—What do I ſay? Is a lover only a man? Oh! he is a being much more ſublime—There is no man for her who loves—her lover is more; all the reſt are leſs—they are the only two of their ſpecies—they do not deſire; they love.

True love is always modeſt, it ſnatches not favours with audacity; it ſteals them with timidity. Myſtery, ſilence, and baſhful modeſty, ſharpen and conceal its ſweet tranſports; its flame, honours, and purifies all its careſſes. Decency and honour accompany it even in the boſom of voluptuouſneſs: true love alone know how to gratify deſire, without detracting any thing from modeſty.

The real value of pleaſure is in the heart which gives it. A real lover would find nothing but pain, anger, and deſpair, even in the poſſeſſion of

what he loved, if he did not believe his love was returned.

Notwithſtanding abſence, privations, and fears; notwithſtanding even deſpair, the powerful attractions of two hearts towards one another have always a ſecret pleaſure totally unknown to tranquil hearts. It is one of the miracles of love to make us find a pleaſure in ſuffering; and true lovers would look upon a ſtate of indifference and forgetfulneſs, which might free them from all their pains, as the worſt of misfortunes.

Love, which levels every one, never exalts the perſon; it only exalts our ſentiments.

Men are in general leſs conſtant than women, and are ſooneſt tired of ſucceſsful love. Woman foreſees the inconſtancy of man, and makes herſelf unhappy. It is this which renders her likewiſe more jealous. When he begins to grow indifferent, ſhe takes as much pains to pleaſe him as he once employed to pleaſe her—ſhe weeps and humbles herſelf, but ſeldom with the ſame ſucceſs; aſſiduouſneſs and attachment win hearts, but never regain them.

It is a great folly for women to endeavour to give ſtability to ſo frivolous and tranſient a paſſion as love. Every thing in nature changes, and is in continual fluctuation, and yet women want to inſpire durable flames. What right have they to expect to be beloved to-day, becauſe they were ſo

yeſterday? Let them preſerve the ſame face, the ſame age, the ſame humour; let them be always the ſame, and we will always love them—that is, if we can. But to be for ever changing, and ſtill expect to be beloved, is only deſiring that we ſhould ceaſe every moment to love them; this is not ſeeking conſtant hearts, but ſuch as are as changeable as their own. The picture of true felicity is no longer pleaſing to men. A corruption of manners has not leſs depraved their taſte than their hearts; they no longer know how to feel what is affecting, nor perceive that which is amiable—You, who to paint voluptuouſneſs, never repreſent any thing but happy lovers revelling in the boſom of delight—how imperfect ſtill are your pictures! You only paint the groſeſt half. The moſt pleaſing tints of voluptuouſneſs are left out—Oh! you have never ſeen a young couple, united under happy auſpices, leaving the nuptial bed, and carrying at once, in their languiſhing and chaſte looks, the intoxication of the tender pleaſures they have taſted, the amiable ſecurity of innocence, and the charming aſſurance of ſpending together the reſt of their lives: this is the moſt raviſhing object which can be offered to the heart of man; this is the true picture of pleaſure; you have ſeen it a thouſand times without knowing it; your hardened hearts are no longer formed to love it.

I cannot conceive why ſo little reſpect is paid to the ladies, that they ſhould be ſo inceſſantly addreſſed with inſipid and gallant diſcourſes, inſulting, and impertinent—compliments which do not even wear the face of ſincerity. To affront them with ſuch evident lies is plainly telling them, that they find no obliging truths to ſay to them. That love ſhould be deluded by the imaginary qualities of the object beloved, happens but too often. But what has all this nonſenſical gibberiſh to do with love: thoſe who make uſe of it do the ſame indifferently to every woman, and would be very much vexed, if we were to believe them ſeriouſly in love with any one. But they ſurely need not be uneaſy about this matter, for we ſhould have ſtrange ideas of love to believe them capable of it; for nothing is ſo diſtant from love as gallantry.

From what I can perceive of the nature of this terrible paſſion, of its wanderings, perplexities, palpitations, tranſports, warm expreſſions, more than energic ſilence, and inexpreſſible looks, which their timidity renders raſh, and which ſhews their deſires by their fears, I am of opinion, that if after ſuch vehement language as this, a lover ſhould happen to ſay but once to his miſtreſs, I love you, ſhe would anſwer in a paſſion, you no longer love me, and would baniſh him her preſence for ever.

True love is a conſuming fire, which carries its heat into other ſentiments, and animates them with

new vigour. This is the reaſon that love is ſaid to have made heroes.

The moment of poſſeſſion is the criſis of love.

The moſt formidable enemy to the duration of love is the want of difficulties to combat, and the neceſſity of ſupporting itſelf. Never was love able to ſuſtain this trial.

True love has this advantage as well as virtue—that it fully compenſates of itſelf all the ſacrifices that we make to it, and that we find a pleaſure in the ſacrifices which we impoſe on ourſelves, even in the reflection of what they coſt us, and in the motive which prompted us to make them.

When we find it impoſſible to enjoy reciprocal love, to ſeek our happineſs in that of the object beloved, is all the conſolation which is left to a hopeleſs paſſion. Love loſes its greateſt charm when abandoned by honour; to know its real value, it is requiſite that the heart ſhould delight in it, and elevate us as well as the beloved object.

If you take away the idea of perfection, you deſtroy enthuſiaſm; if you take away eſteem, you deſtroy love. How can a woman honour a man who diſhonours himſelf? And how can a man love a woman who has not been aſhamed to abandon herſelf to a vile corrupter? They would ſoon mutually deſpiſe each other, and love would be to them but a ſhameful commerce. They will have loſt their honour, but not found happineſs. We

are not without pleaſure, while we ſtill love. The idea of ſatiated love is more unſupportable to a tender heart, than unfortunate love; and to feel a diſguſt towards what we poſſeſs, is a hundred times worſe than to feel a regret for what we have loſt.

Love cannot exiſt without a return, at leaſt not long. Thoſe paſſions that meet with no return, and which are ſaid to make ſo many miſerable beings, are only founded on the ſenſes; if ſome of them ever reach the heart, it is by falſe affinities, by which, however, we are not long deceived. Senſual love cannot diſpenſe with poſſeſſion, and is extinguiſhed by it. True love cannot diſpenſe with the poſſeſſion of the heart, and laſts as long as the relations and qualities which created it. When theſe are chimerical, it laſts as long as the illuſion which created it.

There is no paſſion which cauſes ſo ſtrong an illuſion as love; we conſtrue its violence into a ſign of its duration. The heart, overflowing with ſo tender a ſentiment, extends it to the future; and while this love laſts, we think that it never will have an end. But, on the contrary, it is conſumed by its own ardour. It decays with youth, it vaniſhes with beauty, and with old age; and there never was, ſince the creation of the world, two grey-headed lovers who ſighed for one another.

We muſt expect our admiration to ceaſe ſooner or later; and whenever that happens, the idol which

which we adored vaniſhes, and we reciprocally ſee each other as we really are, and we ſeek with aſtoniſhment for the object of our love; but when our ſearch becomes vain, and we find it impoſſible to meet with it, we become fretful towards that which remains, and our imagination often repreſents it as deformed, as it had embelliſhed it before. There are few people, ſays Rochfaucault, who are not aſhamed of having loved one another, when that love ceaſes. If ſatiated love exhauſt the ſoul, love that has been ſubdued gives it, with a conſciouſneſs of victory, a new elevation, and a more lively ſenſe of all that is great and beautiful.

Love, ſo far from being to be bought, is infallibly deſtroyed by money. Whoever pays, were he the moſt amiable of men, from that very reaſon, cannot long be beloved. He will ſoon pay for another, or rather another will be purchaſed with his money—and in this double connection, formed by intereſt and debauchery, deſtitute of love or honour, and devoid of any real pleaſure, the greedy, faithleſs, and miſerable woman, treated by him who receives, as ſhe treats the fool that beſtows, thus remains quiet towards both.

The man that ſaid I poſſeſs Lais, without her poſſeſſing me, made uſe of a ſilly expreſſion. Poſſeſſion is nothing, unleſs it be reciprocal; it is at moſt the poſſeſſion of the ſex, but not of the individual; therefore, where the morality of love does

not exiſt, why do we make ſo great a fuſs about the reſt: that is eaſily found, and a carter, in that reſpect, is happier than the wealthieſt man.

Away with that baſe man who traffics for a heart, and renders love mercenary! It is he who covers the earth with all the crimes that originate from debauchery. For how ſhould the woman, who ſuffers herſelf once to be purchaſed, not be always to be bought? And which is moſt, the author of her miſery, and the diſgrace ſhe ſoon falls into: the brute who uſes her ill when ſhe is fallen, or the wretch who firſt led her into evil, by ſetting a price on her virtue?

Of

Of LOVERS.

A Bold, forward, and intriguing woman, who only knows how to allure her lovers by coquetry, and preſerve them by her favours, makes them obey like ſlaves on ſervile and trifling occaſions: in important and grave matters ſhe has no power over them. But the woman at once chaſte, amiable, and wiſe; ſhe who forces her's to reſpect her; ſhe who poſſeſſes reſerve and modeſty, ſhe, in a word, who ſuſtains love by eſteem, ſends them with a nod to the end of the world, to battle, to glory, to death, or wherever ſhe pleaſes. I think that this empire is noble and worthy to be purchaſed.

Brantome, ſays, that in the time of Francis I. a young perſon having a talkative lover, impoſed him an abſolute and unlimited ſilence, which he kept ſo faithfully for two whole years, that every body thought he was become dumb through illneſs. One day in a large company his miſtreſs who was not known to be ſuch, for in thoſe times love and courtſhip were kept ſecret, boaſted that ſhe would cure him immediately, and did it with the ſingle word, ſpeak. Is there not a greatneſs and elevation in this kind of love. What could the philo-

ſophy of Pythagoras, with all its oſtentation have done greater than this? What woman now a days could rely upon a ſimilar ſilence for a ſingle day, where ſhe to repay it with the utmoſt price ſhe can put upon it?

Do two lovers love one another? no, you, and I, are proſcribed words in their language—They are no longer two, they are one. Lovers have a thouſand ways of ſweetening abſence, and of bringing themſelves together in a moment. Their attraction knows not the law of diſtance, they would touch one another at the very extremities of the world, they even ſee one another oftener when parted, than when they viſit each other every day, for ſo ſoon as either of them are alone, ſo ſoon they are both together.

Inconſtancy and love are incompatible: the lover who changes, does not really change, he either begins or ceaſes to love. The lover who extols in his miſtreſs imaginary perfections, really ſees them, ſuch as he repreſents them; he does not lie in telling lies—He flatters without debaſing himſelf—and we may at leaſt eſteem, without believing him.

As the idolator enriches with the treaſures which he eſteems the object of his adoration, and decorates upon the altar, the God whom he adores, the lover, not contented with ſeeing his miſtreſs perfect, is inceſſantly endeavouring to add new ornaments,

ments, which ſhe does not want, to charm him. But he finds it neceſſary to decorate her it is a new homage which he imagines he is paying her: It is a new intereſt which he pays for the pleaſure of looking at her. He ſeems to think that every thing is miſplaced, which is not employed in adorning her extreme beauty.

Of Friends and Friendſhip.

WE can neither purchaſe a friend nor a miſtreſs. We have not loſt every thing on earth, when we find a faithful friend.

A good man will never have a better friend than his wife.

A heart full of a ſentiment that overflows, loves to diſcloſe itſelf, and from the want of a miſtreſs ariſes that of a friend.

Affection, but never friendſhip, may ſubſiſt without a return. Friendſhip is an exchange and a contract like others, but it is the moſt refined. The word friend, has no other correlative than itſelf. Any man who is not his friend's friend, is moſt certainly a cheat—For it is only by returning, or feigning to return, friendſhip that we can obtain it.

Nothing has ſo great a power over the human heart, as the voice of friendſhip when properly underſtood, for we know that it never ſpeaks to us but for our intereſt. We may believe that a friend is miſtaken, but not that he purpoſely deceives us—ſometimes we reſiſt his counſels, but we never deſpiſe them.

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We may ſuffer thoſe people who are indifferent to us, to entertain what ideas they pleaſe. but it is a crime to allow a friend to make a merit of what we have not done for him.

It is not good that a man ſhould ſtand alone. Human ſouls, in order to diſplay their whole powers, and to riſe to their juſt value, muſt be united; and the united force of friends, like the ſtratagems of an artificial lover, is incomparably greater than the ſum of their particular ſtrength. Divine friendſhip! there is thy glory.

The communications of friendſhip are withheld before any witneſs whatever. There are a thouſand ſecrets that three friends ſhould know, and that can only be told two by two.

All the charms of the ſociety which ſubſiſts between true friends, is in that free diſcloſure of the heart, which communicates every ſentiment and every thought, and which makes every one, feeling himſelf ſuch as he ought to be, ſhew himſelf to all ſuch as he really is. Suppoſe for a moment ſome ſecret intrigue, ſome connexion that muſt not be known, ſome cauſe for reſerve and myſtery: that very moment all the pleaſure of ſeeing one another vaniſhes, they are conſtrained when together, they ſhun each other, and when they meet, they would wiſh to flee; circumſpection and decorum produce diſtaſte and diſtruſt; how

how is it poſſible to love for a long time thoſe of whom we are afraid.

It is ſaid, that the converſation of friends is never exhauſted. It is true the tongue furniſhes an eaſy prattle to weak attachments. But, oh, friendſhip! Thou lively and celeſtial ſentiment, what diſcourſes are worthy thee? What tongue dares be thy interpreter? Never can what we ſay to our friend be equal to what we feel when by his ſide: Great God! how much more forcibly does a ſqueeze of the hand, an animated look, an affectionate embrace, and the ſigh which follows it, ſpeak, and how inſipid is the firſt word which is uttered after all this!

Silence, the ſtate ſuited to contemplation, is one of the greateſt enjoyments of men of feeling—But the importunate prevent them from taſting it, and friends want to be alone, to be able to ſay nothing at their eaſe. They would wiſh to retire, as it were, into one another; the leaſt interruption is mortifying, the leaſt reſtraint inſupportable —If the heart ſometimes carries a word to the mouth, it is ſo pleaſant to be able to utter it with freedom! It ſeems as if we dare not think what we dare not as freely ſpeak, and as if the preſence of one ſtranger laid a reſtraint upon ſouls, that would otherwiſe underſtand one another ſo well.

The communication of our hearts impreſſes melancholy, with an inexpreſſible ſoftneſs and tenderneſs,

derneſs, which joy does not poſſeſs; and friendſhip has been particularly given to the unfortunate, for a comfort in their misfortunes, and a conſolation under all their ſufferings.

What additional force the voice of a friend gives to the arguments of a wiſe man?

In a very intimate ſociety, the manners and characters become alike; friends in blending their ſouls, blend likewiſe their manner of thinking, of feeling, and of ſpeaking.

Ill-timed conſolations ſerve only to ſharpen violent afflictions. Coolneſs and indifference find words; but ſadneſs and ſilence are the true language of friendſhip.

We may repulſe blows that are aimed at us by the hands of our enemies, but when we ſee our friends holding a dagger amongſt the aſſaſſins—there is no reſource, but to hide our faces.

There are ſome circumſpect friends who, fearful of getting into trouble, refuſe their advice on difficult occaſions, and whoſe reſerve increaſes with the danger of their friends: but real friendſhip knows nothing of theſe timid precautions.

A rich or great man has no true friend, but ſuch as are not the dupes of appearances, and who pity more than envy him, notwithſtanding his proſperity.

What is it that renders friendſhip ſo cool, and ſo unſtable amongſt women, even between thoſe who are capable of loving? It is the empire of beauty and the jealouſy of conqueſts.

SEN-

SENTIMENT.

ALL becomes ſentiment in the heart of a man of feeling. The whole univerſe offers him only ſubjects of tenderneſs and gratitude. He every where perceives the beneficent hand of Providence. He collects his gifts in the productions of the earth. He ſees his table covered by his cares. He ſleeps ſecure under his protection, and awakes in peace. He feels his leſſons in his misfortunes, and his favours in his proſperity. All the bleſſings enjoyed by thoſe who are dear to him, are ſo many new ſubjects of adoration. If the God of the univerſe eſcapes his feeble eyes, he ſees every where the common father of men. Thus to honour his ſupreme gifts, is it not ſerving in the beſt manner poſſible the Infinite Being?

O ſentiment! ſoft life of the ſoul, where is the heart of iron that thou haſt never touched? Where is that unfortunate mortal from whom thou never forcedſt a tear? The ſcenes of joy and pleaſure which produce the vivacity of ſentiment, exhauſt nature for a moment, only to re-animate her with new vigour. They are never dangerous. In proportion as we advance in years, every ſentiment is concentrated; we loſe every day ſomething that hath been

been dear to us, and we replace it no more. Thus we die gradually, till loving at laſt but ourſelves, we ceaſe to feel and to live, before we ceaſe to exiſt. But a feeling heart ſhields itſelf with all its might againſt this anticipated death. When the cold begins at extremities, it draws around it all its natural heat. The more it loſes, the more it attatches itſelf to that which is left. And it in a manner adheres to the laſt object by the ties of all the reſt.

Of

Of Humanity and Benificence.

MAN, be humane—this is your firſt duty. Be ſo towards all ranks, all ages, and to every thing that is not a ſtranger to man. What is wiſdom without humanity? The opportunity of making men happy, is leſs frequent than is generally ſuppoſed: the puniſhment of once neglecting it, is never to meet with it again; and the uſe we make of it leaves us an eternal ſentiment of ſatisfaction or repentance.

It is not only money that the unfortunate want: They are idle benefactors who know only how to do good with their purſe. Comforts, counſels, cares, friends and protection, are ſo many reſources which pity leaves, in default of riches, for the relief of the indigent. Some are only oppreſſed for want of a method of making their complaints known. The matter of uneaſineſs, is, perhaps a word which they cannot ſpeak, a reaſon which they know not how to explain, or the door of a great man which they cannot enter. The intrepid ſupport of diſintereſted virtue, is ſufficient to remove a number of obſtacles; and the eloquence of an honeſt man may frighten tyranny in the full plenitude

nitude of its power. If you would be really a man, learn to humble yourſelf; humanity, like pure and wholeſome water, fertilizes the low grounds: it always ſeeks its level, and ſhuns the dry rocks which threaten the country, and afford only an hurtful ſhade, or a ſplendour that ſerves only to eclipſe, and cruſh their neighbours.

It is only the continual exerciſe of beneficence that can guard the beſt hearts from the contagion of the ambitious: a tender intereſt in the misfortunes of others, aids us in diſcovering their ſource, and in guarding againſt thoſe vices which have produced them.

If heaven ever deigns to grant any human ſupplications, it is not thoſe which flattery and baſeneſs extort in the preſence of thoſe they praiſe, but thoſe which a ſimple and grateful heart beſpeak in ſecret. This is the incenſe grateful to a beneficent ſoul.

A beneficent man but very indifferently gratifies his inclinations in the midſt of towns, where he finds few objects on which to exert his zeal, but plotters and ſcoundrels. It would be as difficult for a feeling and beneficent ſoul to be happy in the ſight of miſery, as for an upright man to preſerve his virtue always unſullied in the midſt of reprobates.

A ſoul of this ſtamp feels not that barbarous pity, which is ſatisfied with turning away from the miſeries it might alleviate—It ſeeks them out

for

for the pleaſure of relieving them. It is the exiſtence and not the ſight of miſery which torments it. It does not reſt ſatisfied with the objects not being preſent: it is requiſite for its peace, that there ſhould be none, at leaſt near it, for it would be unreaſonable to make its happineſs dependant upon that of all mankind.

No good man can ever boaſt of leiſure, as long as there is good to be done, a country to ſerve, and the unfortunate to comfort.

The firſt wants, or at beſt thoſe which are the moſt ſenſible, are thoſe of a beneficent heart; and ſo long as there are any in want of common neceſſaries, what honeſt man has a ſuperfluity?

It is only the unfortunate who feel the value of beneficent ſouls.

Of

Of Nature and Habit.

NATURE, we are told, is only habit—what does this mean? Are there not habits which are only contracted by force, and which never ſtifle nature. Such, for example, is the habit of plants, which are prevented for a time from growing vertically. The plant reſtored to liberty, retains the inclination which we have forced it to take. But this has not made the ſap of the plant change its primitive direction, and if it continues to vegetate, it becomes vertical again. It is juſt the ſame with the inclinations of man. So long as we remain in the ſame ſtate, we may preſerve thoſe inclinations which are the reſult of habit, and which are the leaſt natural to us—But ſo ſoon as we change that ſituation, habit ceaſes and nature recurs. Education is certainly nothing more than habit. Are there not people who loſe and forget their education, and others who preſerve it? From whence proceeds this difference? If we muſt confine the word nature to habits that are conformable to it, we may ſpare this fuſtian.

We are born with ſenſibility, and we are affected from our birth in various ways, by the objects that ſurround us. So ſoon as we become conſcious of

our

our ſenſations, we are diſpoſed to ſeek or flee from the objects which produce them, juſt as they are agreeable or diſagreeable to us, juſt as we find a congruity or incongruity between ourſelves and theſe objects, and laſtly, according to the judgement we form of them, from the idea of happineſs and perfection which reaſon gives us. Theſe diſpoſitions are extended and ſtrengthened, in proportion as we become more ſenſible and enlightened. But being under the influence of habit, they are more or leſs modified, according to our opinions. Before this modification takes place, they are in us what I call nature.

The charms of habit ariſe from the ſloth which is natural to man. And this ſloth increaſes the more we yield to it. We find a much greater facility in doing any thing the ſecond time than the firſt. The road being already beaten becomes eaſier to follow. Thus we obſerve, that the power of habit operates very powerfully on old men, and indolent people, and very little on young and active people. It is a regimen good only for weak minds, and enfeebles them more and more every day. The only habit uſeful to children, is that of ſubmitting without difficulty to the neceſſity of things. And the only habit uſeful to man is that of ſubmitting without pain to the dictates of reaſon. All other habits are a vice.

Of

Of VICE.

RIDICULE is the favourite arm of vice, and by eradicating, from the bottom of our hearts, the reſpect which is due to virtue, it extinguiſhes the love we have for it.

Some people bluſh at being thought modeſt, and become bold through ſhame; and this falſe ſhame corrupts more good hearts, than bad inclinations. It is the firſt introducer of vice into a virtuous heart, ſtifles the voice of conſcience by public clamour, and repreſſes the courage of doing a good action through a dread of cenſure.

Thus we inſenſibly ſuffer ourſelves to be ſubdued, for fear of being thought ridiculous; and we would ſooner brave a hundred dangers than one ſtroke of raillery. But what is this reluctance which makes the ralleries of people whoſe eſteem is of no value, of ſo much conſequence?

Could we ſufficiently diſplay the futility of vice, how much would it appear to be diſappointed when it has attained all its wiſhes! Why this barbarous inclination to corrupt innocence, and to make a victim of a young creature whom we ought to protect, but whom, by this firſt ſtep, we plunge into an everlaſting

lasting abyss of misery, from whence she never can emerge while she lives? It arises from nothing but brutality, vanity, and folly: nor is it a natural pleasure; it exists only in opinion, and in the vilest of opinions, because it makes us despise ourselves. He who is conscious of being the worst of men, is afraid of a comparison with others, who wishes to pass first, in order to appear the less odious.

Let us see whether those who have the greatest avidity for this imaginary pleasure are ever amiable young people, capable of pleasing, and who would be more excusable in being nice? No, the man who has the advantage of a good person, merit, and sensibility, is not afraid of being proved by his mistress: with a just confidence he will say to her: You are acquainted with pleasures; no matter. My heart promises you some that you have never tasted. But an old satyr, worn out with debauchery, divested of every thing that can render him agreeable, totally devoid of delicacy or consideration, incapable and unworthy of pleasing any woman who knows how to distinguish an amiable person, persuades himself that he shall supply all these deficiencies with an innocent young woman, by anticipating experience, and exciting the first emotion of sense. His last hope is to please her by novelty. This is incontestably the secret motive of his fancy —but he is deceived in his foolish attempt. This

same

ſame nature never fails to claim her rights. Every woman who ſells herſelf, hath ſurrendered herſelf before to her own choice, and hath made the compariſon which he feared; he therefore buys an imaginary pleaſure, and is not the leſs hated for it.

Of INGRATITUDE.

INGRATITUDE would be leſs frequent, if intereſted benefits were leſs common: it is ſo natural a ſentiment to love thoſe who do us good. Ingratitude is not natural to the heart of man, although intereſt is. Thoſe who receive obligations are much ſeldomer ungrateful than thoſe who confer them are intereſted. If you ſell me your gifts, I ſhall bargain for the price. But if you feign to give, in order to ſell afterwards on your own terms, you commit a fraud — The heart receives laws only from itſelf; by trying to chain it, you ſet it at liberty; to ſuffer it to remain free, is the moſt effectual way of confining it in chains.

Do we ever find that a man, when forgotten by his benefactor, forgets him? On the contrary, he ſpeaks of him always with pleaſure. He never thinks of him but with affection. If he finds an opportunity of ſhewing him by ſome unexpected ſervices, that he remembers his, with what interior pleaſure he then ſatisfies his gratitude! With what joy does he make himſelf known! With what tranſports he tells him, now my turn is come! This is the voice of nature. Never did a real benefit make an ungrateful man.

Of JEALOUSY.

JEALOUSY in love ſeems to be ſo near a kin to nature, that it is difficult to believe that it does not proceed from it. It is, however, inconteſtible, that the averſion we feel towards every thing which diſturbs and combats our pleaſures, is a natural emotion, and that, to a certain degree, the deſire of poſſeſſing excluſively the object of our affections is likewiſe natural.

Jealouſy with us has its ſource in the ſocial paſſions, more than in a primitive inſtinct. In almoſt all the connections of gallantry the lover hates his rivals much more than he loves his miſtreſs. If he be fearful of not being the only perſon attended to, it is the effect of ſelf love, and he ſuffers much more from vanity than love.

It is only in connections, formed by eſteem and ſentiment, that jealouſy is a delicate paſſion, becauſe, if love is uneaſy, eſteem is conſtant; and the more it is exacting, the more credulous it is. A lover who is guided by eſteem, and who only loves in his miſtreſs the qualities which he reſpects, will be jealous, but neither paſſionate, ſuſpicious, or corrupt: but he will be tender and fearful; he will

be more alarmed than irritated; he will be much more anxious to regain his miſtreſs, than to threaten his rival; he will ſupplant him, if he can, as an obſtacle to his happineſs, without hating him as an enemy; his unjuſt pride will not be fooliſhly offended that any one has dared enter into competition with him; but feeling that the right of preference is ſolely founded on merit, and that honour lies in the ſucceſs, he will redouble his efforts to render himſelf amiable, and he will probably ſucceed.

Of VANITY.

THERE is no folly of which a man may not be weaned, if he be not a fool, except vanity. For this there is no remedy but experience, if any thing can ever cure a man of it.

The vanity of man is the ſource of his greateſt perplexities. There is nobody ſo perfect, nor ſo happy, in whom it is not the ſource of more pain than pleaſure. If ever vanity made a happy being upon earth, to a certainty that being was a fool.

Vanity breathes nothing but excluſions and preferences. Exacting a great deal, and granting nothing, it is always unjuſt.

HYPOCRISY.

HYPOCRISY is an homage which vice pays to virtue: Yes, like the aſſaſſins of Ceſar who proſtrated themſelves at his feet, to ſtab him with greater ſecurity. To conceal their depravity with the dangerous veil of hypocriſy is not honouring virtue, but outraging it by profaning its enſigns. It is joining cowardice and impoſture to all other vices, and ſhutting ourſelves out from ever returning to probity. There are ſome elevated characters who carry, even amidſt crimes, a certain greatneſs and generoſity, which diſcover in them ſome ſparks of that celeſtial fire which animates great ſouls. But the mean and cringing ſoul of the hypocrites is like a dead body, where we no longer find heat or fire, nor any ſymptom of returning to life. I appeal to experience: we have ſeen great villains, collected in themſelves, ending their courſe in a godly manner, and dying in the conviction that they were the favoured of heaven. But nobody ever yet knew an hypocrite become an honeſt man. We might reaſonably have attempted the converſion of Cartouch; but no wiſe man would ever have undertaken that of Cromwell.

It

It is only a good man who knows the art of making others ſo. An hypocrite may aſſume the voice of virtue, but he never will inſpire the taſte of it in any body; for if he knew how to make it appear amiable, he would love it himſelf.

Of WICKEDNESS.

ALL wickedneſs proceeds from weakneſs; a child is only wicked, becauſe he is feeble; make him ſtrong, he will become good. The man who could accompliſh every thing, would never do any harm. Of all the attributes of the all-powerful Divinity, goodneſs is that which is the moſt indiſpenſable in our conception of him. All people who have ever acknowledged two principles, have always looked upon the bad one as inferior to the good; and if they had not, they would have reaſoned abſurdly. The wicked man fears, and flies from himſelf. He ſeeks amuſement, by ſtarting out of himſelf. He looks around him with inquietude for an object of entertainment. Without bitter ſatyr, or inſulting raillery, he would be always melancholy. The ſneer of deriſion is his ſole pleaſure. The ſerenity of the juſt man, on the contrary, is internal. His laugh proceeds not from malignity, but joy: he carries the ſource of it within himſelf; he is as joyful when alone, as when in the middle of a circle; he draws not happineſs from thoſe that ſurround him; he communicates it to them.

It

It is our own paſſions that irritate us againſt thoſe of others. It is our intereſt that makes us hate the wicked; if they did us no harm, we ſhould have more pity for them than hatred. It is the injuries which the wicked do us, that makes us forget thoſe which they do themſelves. We ſhould pardon their vices more readily, did we but know how ſeverely they are puniſhed by their own hearts. We feel the injury, but we do not ſee its puniſhment. The advantages that reſult from wickedneſs are apparent, but the pains it cauſes is interior. The man who hopes to enjoy the fruits of his vices, is as much tormented as if he had not ſucceeded: the object is changed, but the uneaſineſs is ſtill the ſame. In vain do bad men endeavour to dazzle the world with their riches, and hide their hearts; their conduct exemplifies it in ſpite of themſelves. But in order to ſee the true ſtate of their hearts, we muſt not poſſeſs one like it.

If there exiſted a man miſerable enough never to have done any thing in all his life, the recollection of which made him an object of complacence to himſelf, and happy to have exiſted, that man would be incapable of ever knowing himſelf; and for want of feeling what ſpecies of goodneſs was ſuitable to his nature, he would be conſtrained to remain wicked, and he would be eternally unhappy.

Of CHARACTERS.

THERE are ſouls which ſo nearly reſemble one another, that they have no marked features by which we can at firſt ſight diſtinguiſh any difference in them: and this difficulty of defining makes a ſuperficial obſerver miſtake them for vulgar ſouls. But this very circumſtance forms their character, that it is impoſſible to diſtinguiſh them, and that the outlines of the common model, of which ſomething is always wanting in every individual, ſhine equally in them.

Thus each proof of a print has faults peculiar to itſelf, which mark its character; and if there is one ſtruck quite perfect, although it appear beautiful to us at firſt ſight, we muſt take great notice of it to be able to know it again.

How can we repreſs the feebleſt paſſion when it has no counterpoiſe? This is the inconvenience of cold and inactive characters. All goes well ſo long as their indifference ſhields them from temptations: but if they are ever overtaken, they are no ſooner attacked than vanquiſhed, and reaſon which rules, when alone, has never any ſtrength to reſiſt the moſt trifling effort. Thoſe phlegmatic men,

who

who oftener conſult their eyes than their hearts, are better judges of the paſſions of others, than people who are more impetuous, lively, or vain; who always begin by ſuppoſing themſelves in the place of others, and never know how to ſee what they feel.

The man who is only good, remains ſo no longer than he finds a pleaſure in being ſo. Goodneſs dies and periſhes under the ſhock of human paſſions: the man who is only good, is good but for himſelf.

Obſervation teaches us, that there are ſome characters which are early diſplayed; and ſome children, whoſe diſpoſitions we may ſtudy at the breaſt of their nurſes. Theſe form a ſeparate claſs, and diſtinguiſh themſelves from the very beginning. But with regard to others which are developed much ſlower, to attempt forming them before we know them, is running a riſque of ſpoiling what good nature has done, without ſubſtituting any thing better in its place. To change a mind, it would be neceſſary to change its interior organization: to change a character, we muſt change the temperament on which it depends. Have we ever heard of a violent man becoming phlegmatic, or that a methodical or cold man acquired imagination? I ſhould conceive it as poſſible to change black to white, or make a fool a man of ſenſe. It is then in vain that we attempt to mould different diſpoſitions on one common model. We may re-

ſtrain, but not alter them: we may prevent men from diſcovering their real characters, but we never can change them; and if they diſguiſe their diſpoſitions in their ordinary courſe of life, you will ſee them reſume their original character, on every important occaſion, and they will give themſelves up to it with the leſs moderation, that in doing ſo they no longer impoſe on themſelves any reſtraint. Nay more, the buſineſs is not to change the character, or to mould the natural diſpoſition; but on the contrary, to puſh it as far as it will go, and to cultivate and prevent it from degenerating—for it is thus that a man becomes as perfect as his nature will admit, and that the work of nature is completed in him by education. It is therefore neceſſary, before we attempt to cultivate a character, to ſtudy it, and wait patiently till it begins to expand, furniſh it opportunities of ſhewing itſelf, and always forbear acting, rather than act injudiciouſly. To ſome kinds of genius it is neceſſary to give wings, to others fetters. The one muſt be excited, the other reſtrained: the one muſt be flattered, the other intimidated: we muſt ſometimes endeavour to give knowledge, at others endeavour to prevent the attainment of it. Some men are made to carry knowledge to its higheſt pitch; to others it is even dangerous to be able to read. Let us watch the firſt dawn of reaſon; this diſplays the character, and

gives it its real form; by this too we cultivate it; and there is no education that can be of uſe before the attainment of reaſon. All characters are good and ſound in themſelves. There are no errors in nature. All the vices ſaid to be inherent in ſome natures, are the effects of bad impreſſions. There is no villain whoſe inclinations, had they been better directed, would not have produced great virtues.

There is no underſtanding, though never ſo weak, from which ſome uſeful talents may not be drawn, if we take them upon a certain bias; as monſtrous and deformed figures appear beautiful and well proportioned, when placed in their proper point of view.

COQUET-

COQUETRY.

THE arts of Coquetry require a finer diſcernment than thoſe of politeneſs; for, provided a well-bred woman behaves politely indiſcriminately towards every body, it is ſufficient. But the Coquet would ſoon loſe her power by ſuch an aukward uniformity of conduct. By continually trying to oblige all her lovers, ſhe would offend them all. Obliging manners in ſociety to all men, do not fail to pleaſe each in particular; provided we be well treated, we do not examine ſo narrowly into diſtinctions. But in love, a favour not excluſive, is an injury. A man of feeling would infinitely rather be injuriouſly treated himſelf, than ſhare the good graces of his miſtreſs in common with many; and the worſt evil which can happen to him, is not to be treated with diſtinction.

A woman, therefore, who wiſhes to preſerve ſeveral admirers, ſhould perſuade each of them that he is preferred; and ſhe muſt even perſuade him of this, in preſence of all the reſt, whom ſhe deceives equally in his preſence.

Would you wiſh to ſee a man quite embarraſſed, place him between two women with whom he is ſecretly connected, and then obſerve what a fooliſh

appearance

appearance he will make. Place a woman in the ſame manner between two men, (and the example is certainly not leſs frequent) and you will be aſtoniſhed at the addreſs with which ſhe will make them both laugh at one another. But if that woman were to expreſs the ſame confidence to both, and were to be equally familiar with them, how could they remain one inſtant her dupes? For, by treating them both alike, would ſhe not diſcover that they had an equal right over her? Oh! ſhe knows how to act her part better. Far from treating them in the ſame manner, ſhe affects to put an inequality between them; ſhe manages ſo well, that he whom ſhe flatters, thinks it is the effect of tenderneſs; and he whom ſhe treats ill, the love of teizing him. Each, therefore, ſatisfied with his lot, ſuppoſes her entirely occupied with him, while ſhe is in reality only occupied with herſelf.

There is a certain malicious and ſportive Coquetry, which confounds a lover ſtill more than ſilence and diſdain. What a pleaſure, to ſee a fine Celadon quite diſconcerted, bewildered, and loſt at each repartee! To excite in him emotions leſs warm, but more acute, than thoſe of love.

Adverſity, Fate.

REASON teaches us to ſupport Adverſity with patience; not to aggravate our misfortunes by uſeleſs complaints; and never to ſet too high a value upon any thing human; nor exhauſt, in weeping over our misfortunes, the little ſtrength we have to ſupport them: finally, ſometimes to remember, that man has no knowledge of futurity, nor is ſufficiently acquainted with himſelf to diſcover, whether what happens be good or evil for him.—A judicious and moderate man will act thus, when a prey to misfortunes. He will endeavour to profit by them, as a prudent gameſter tries to make the beſt of a bad ſtroke which chance brings him, and without lamenting, as a child who falls and cries over the ſtone which hath hurt him: he will even be able to apply, if neceſſary, a ſalutary cauſtic to his wound, and make it ſmart, in order to cure it. Every work of man may be deſtroyed by man. There are no indelible characters, but thoſe which nature imprints; and nature makes neither princes, nor riches, nor lords. What will become of the Baſhaw, who has been brought up to nothing but grandeur, when ſtript of his honours?

nours? What will become of the uſurer, when reduced to poverty, who can only live on gold? What will become of the oſtentatious fool, who knows not how to employ his own power, and whoſe whole exiſtence depends on extraneous things?

Happy is he who knows how to renounce every thing which renounces him, and remain a man, in ſpite of fate! Let others extol that vanquiſhed king, who buries himſelf under the ruins of his throne. For my part, I deſpiſe him; for I ſee that he only exiſts in his crown, and that he is nothing unleſs he is a king. The king who loſes his crown, and knows how to ſupport himſelf without it, is above it: from the rank of king, which a coward, a fool, or a bad man, may hold as well as another, but which ſo few men know how to fill with propriety, he aſcends to the ſtate of man. He then overcomes and braves fortune: he owes nothing but to himſelf; and when he has nothing left to ſhow but himſelf, he ſtill retains ſome conſequence. Yes, I love a thouſand times better the King of Syracuſe, ſchoolmaſter at Corinth, and the King of Macedonia, regiſter at Rome, than a wretched Tarquin, ignorant what to do, when deprived of his ſtate; or the heir and ſon of a king of kings*, the jeſt of all who dare to inſult his mi-

* Vonones, ſon of Phraates, King of the Parthians.

ſery,

fery, wandering from court to court, ſeeking every where ſuccour, and meeting every where with affronts, for want of knowing how to follow any other trade, than that which is no longer in his power. If you wiſh to ſubdue fortune, you muſt begin by making yourſelf independant of her. To reign by opinion, begin by reigning over it.

Social Inſtitutions.

MAN, when in a ſtate of nature, is every thing within himſelf: he is the numerical unite; he is an abſolute whole, which hath no reference but to itſelf and its like. The civilized man is a fraction of an unite, which is governed by its denominator, and whoſe value conſiſts in its relation to the whole, which is the ſocial body.

The beſt ſocial inſtitutions are thoſe which are able to change man's nature; to take away from them their abſolute exiſtence, and to ſubſtitute a relative one, and to change ſelf-love into ſocial affection. So that each individual ſhould think himſelf no longer one, but a part of a whole.—A citizen of Rome was neither Caius, nor Lucius, but a Roman: he even loved his country, independently of himſelf. Regulus pretended that he was a Carthaginian, as having become the property of his maſter. In the character of a foreigner, he refuſed ſitting in the ſenate of Rome, till a Carthaginian ordered him. He was filled with indignation, when they attempted to ſave his life. He conquered, and returned in triumph to die in tortures.

tures. This has very little reſemblance, I am afraid, to thoſe men that we have any knowledge of at preſent.

When the Lacedemonian Pedaretus preſented himſelf as a candidate for admiſſion to the council of the three hundred, he was rejected, and returned joyful, that there were three hundred men to be found in Sparta more worthy than himſelf. Admitting this demonſtration of joy to have been ſincere, and there is ſome reaſon to believe that it was, it ſhews him to have been a true citizen. A Spartan lady had five ſons in the army, and was impatiently waiting intelligence of the battle. A meſſenger arrives; ſhe aſks him the news with fear. He replies, "Your five ſons have been "killed!"——"Vile ſlave! was that what I aſked "you?"——"We have gained the victory!"—The mother runs to the temple, to return thanks to the gods! Such is a true citizen.

All partial ſocieties, when they are ſtrictly united, alienate themſelves from large ones.——Every patriot is harſh to ſtrangers; thoſe are but men, and nothing in his eyes.

This inconvenience is inevitable, but it is trifling. What is moſt eſſential, is, to appear worthy to the people with whom we live. The Spartans were to all appearance ambitious, avaricious, and unjuſt; but diſintereſtedneſs, equity, and concord reigned

reigned within their walls. Miſtruſt thoſe coſmopolites, who ſearch in their books for thoſe farfetched duties which they diſdain to fulfil at home. Such a philoſopher loves the Tartars, in order to be freed from the duty of loving his neighbours.

NATIONS.

NATIONS.

THERE is but one ſtep from knowledge to ignorance, and the alternative from one to the other is frequent among nations. But we have never known a people once corrupted, return to virtue.

People who have any morals, and who conſequently reſpect the laws, and do not wiſh to refine upon ancient cuſtoms, ought carefully to avoid learning, and above all, learned men, whoſe ſententious and dogmatical maxims, would ſoon teach them to deſpiſe thoſe laws and cuſtoms; which is always a ſure ſign of the corruption of a nation.

The ſmalleſt alteration of eſtabliſhed cuſtoms, though advantageous in ſome things, is always prejudicial to morals; for cuſtom forms the morals of the people: and they no ſooner ceaſe to reſpect them, than they loſe all rule, but their paſſions, and all reſtraint but the laws, which can ſometimes govern the wicked, but never make them become good.

We generally perceive a greater vigor of ſoul in thoſe men, who have been preſerved in their youth from a premature corruption, than in thoſe with whom irregularity began with the power of yielding

to

to it. And this is undoubtedly one reaſon, why people, who have morals, greatly ſurpaſs in courage and underſtanding thoſe people who are deſtitute of them. The firſt captivate by thoſe little detatched qualities which they call wit, ſagacity, fineſſe.—But thoſe great and noble properties of wiſdom and reaſon, by which men diſtinguiſh and make themſelves reſpected, by worthy actions, by virtues, by undertakings really uſeful: theſe qualities are never found but in the firſt.

Nations, like individuals, are only docile in their youth; but they become incorrigible as they grow old. When cuſtoms are once eſtabliſhed, and prejudices rooted, it is a dangerous and vain enterprize to attempt to reform them.

The multitude cannot bear to have their wounds probed, in order to cure them. They are like thoſe weak and ſilly people who, when ſick, ſhudder at the ſight of the phyſician.

The beſt method of diſcovering the real morals of a people, is, to obſerve their private lives, in the moſt numerous ranks; for, to confine your attention to the rich and great, is no more than looking at players.

All great towns reſemble each other; and all the people in them are mixt, as well as their morals confounded. We muſt not go to capitals to ſtudy nations. Paris and London appear to me the ſame city: their inhabitants differ a little in their prejudices;

dices; but they have an equal ſhare of them, and all their practical maxims are the ſame.

We know what ſort of men muſt neceſſarily be aſſembled in courts. We know what kind of morals muſt be produced by a number of people being drawn together, and by diſparity of fortune.

Whenever I hear of a town, compoſed of two hundred thouſand ſouls, I can immediately form an idea how the people live in it. What farther knowledge I might gain on the ſpot, would not be worth the trouble of going to acquire.

It is in diſtant provinces alone, where there is leſs buſtle of commerce, where ſtrangers travel leſs, where the inhabitants ſeldomer change their abodes, and do not undergo ſuch viciſſitudes of fortune, that we muſt go to ſtudy the genius and morals of a nation. We may take a curſory view of the metropolis as we paſs, but we muſt go to diſtant provinces to view the kingdom. The French are not in Paris; they are in Touraine. The Engliſh are more Engliſh in Yorkſhire than in London; and the Spaniſh are more Spaniſh in Gallicia than at Madrid. In thoſe diſtant provinces, a people are characterized, and ſhew themſelves ſuch as they are; and there the good and bad effects of government are moſt felt; as by extending the radius of a circle, diviſions are made more exact.

The populace compoſe mankind: for the few who do not come under that denomination, are not worth counting.

counting. Men are the ſame in all ſtates; and if this be ſo, the moſt populous are intitled to the greateſt reſpect. All civil diſtinctions diſappear before a thinking man: he perceives the ſame feeling and the ſame paſſions in the common ſoldier, as in men of the higheſt rank. He diſcerns the ſame language, and the ſame colouring, more or leſs heightened; and if they ever eſſentially differ, the difference is not in favour of the moſt diſguiſed. The multitude ſhew themſelves as they are, and are certainly not amiable; but it is highly requiſite for men of the world to diſguiſe themſelves: if we were to ſee them in their real ſhape, they would inſpire us with horror.

Of GOVERNMENT.

IT is good to know how to employ men as they are; it is ſtill better to make them become ſuch as we would have them. This was the great art of ancient governments, in thoſe diſtant periods of time when philoſophers gave laws to the people, and only employed their authority to render them wiſe and happy. Form men, therefore, if you want to command men; if you would have them obedient to the laws, make thoſe laws beloved, and let their greateſt inducement to do what they ought, be the reflection that it is their duty; in ſhort, make virtue reign.

Puniſhments are rare, in a well-governed ſtate, not becauſe there is a great deal of lenity, but becauſe there are few criminals. When a ſtate is in its decline, a multitude of crimes are committed with impunity. Neither the Senate, nor Conſuls in the Roman Republic, ever attempted to grant pardons; neither did the people, though they ſometimes repealed their own ſentences. Frequent pardons announce, that crimes will not long ſtand in need of them; and every one may perceive to what that tends. Frequent puniſhments are always

ways a mark of the weakneſs or ſloth of a government. There are few people ſo bad that they might not be employed in ſomething uſeful. We have no right to take away the life of any criminal for an example to others, unleſs it be the lives of thoſe who could not be preſerved without danger.

One of the ſimpleſt and eaſieſt rules by which we may judge of the relative goodneſs of a government, is its population. In every country where population decreaſes, the ſtate is on its decline; and every country where it increaſes, if it be even the pooreſt, is infallibly the beſt governed. But it is requiſite that this population ſhould be the natural effects of its government and morals; for if its population is increaſed by colonies, or any other accidental or adventitious means, the remedy would prove an evil. When Auguſtus made laws againſt celibacy, theſe laws proved the decline of the Roman empire. The goodneſs of the government ſhould induce the citizen to marry, but the laws ſhould not compel him. We muſt not examine what is effected by force, for the law which militates againſt the conſtitution is eluded, and becomes vain; but that which is effected through the influence of morals, and the natural bent of government, for theſe are the only means that have a permanent effect.

The good abbey of St. Peter conceived it to be good policy always to ſeek a remedy for every ſeparate evil, inſtead of tracing their ſource, and diſcovering that they could only be eradicated all at once. It is not neceſſary to employ a ſeparate remedy for every ulcer that comes upon the body of a ſick perſon, but to purify the whole maſs of blood which produces them.

It is ſaid that there are premiums offered in England for the encouragement of agriculture: this is a ſufficient proof to me that it will not flouriſh there long.

The ſecond mark of the relative goodneſs of a government is deduced from its population, but in a different manner; that is, from the diſtribution, and not the number of people. Two ſtates, although quite equal in point of extent and number of men, may be very unequal in point of force; and the moſt powerful of the two will always be that where the inhabitants are the moſt equally diſperſed throughout its territories: that which has not ſo many great cities, and which is therefore apparently leſs flouriſhing, will always overcome the other. A number of great towns exhauſt and weaken a ſtate. The wealth they produce is apparent and illuſive; it is much money, and little ſtrength.

We learn nothing by only ſeeing the apparent form of a government, coloured by the pomp of admi-

adminiſtration, and the jargon of its miniſters; if we do not at the ſame time ſtudy its nature, by the effects it produces on the people, and in all the ſteps of the adminiſtration. The fundamental difference in form, being divided among all thoſe ſteps, it is only by taking them all in, that the true difference can be aſcertained. In one country the ſpirit of the government is diſcovered by the manœuvres of its ſervants; in another we muſt be preſent at a borough election of its members of Parliament, to judge whether the nation be really free.

It is impoſſible to form an adequate idea of the government of any country, by only viewing its towns, as the ſpirit and effects of it are never the ſame in town and in the country: it is the country that forms the kingdom; it is the country people that form the nation.

There are ſome people, without any phyſiognomy, who ought never to ſit to a painter; there are ſome governments, without any diſtinguiſhing characters, who have no need of hiſtorians; for ſo ſoon as we know what place a man holds, we are acquainted with every thing that he will do in it.

The people rarely rebel againſt the laws till their governors begin to infringe them in ſome reſpects. Upon this ſure principle in China, whenever a revolt happens in any province, they always begin by puniſhing its governor.

Kings and Kingdoms.

ARCHIMEDES, quietly ſeated on the ſea bank, and launching a large veſſel with facility, repreſents an able monarch, governing in his cabinet his vaſt dominions, and putting every thing in motion, while he himſelf appears inactive. The greateſt Kings celebrated in hiſtory were never brought up to govern; that is a ſcience which is never leſs poſſeſſed than, after having ſtudied it too much, and which is better acquired by obeying than commanding.

In order that a monarchical ſtate be well governed, it is requiſite that its greatneſs and extent be proportioned to the faculties of its governor. To conquer is eaſier than to rule. With a lever ſufficiently powerful, a touch of the finger would ſhake the world; but it would require the ſhoulders of Hercules to ſupport it.

The art of reigning conſiſts in being the protector of the laws, and in finding a hundred ways of making them loved. A weak man poſſeſſing power may puniſh crimes as well as the wiſeſt; but a wiſe ſtateſman knows how to prevent the commiſſion of crimes; he extends his reſpectable empire

empire more over wills than actions. If he could make all men act right, he would have nothing more left to do, and the completion of his work would be, to remain inactive.

The only eulogium worthy of a king, is not that which is uttered by the mercenary mouth of an orator, but by the voice of a free people.

Let Kings admit into their councils such men only as are capable of giving them good advice. Let them renounce that old prejudice arising from the pride of the great, that the art of governing the people is more difficult than that of instructing them, as if it were not easier to engage men to do what is right of their own accord, than to compel them to it. Let the greatest and wisest men find honourable protections in their courts; let them receive there the only recompence worthy of them, that of contributing by their credit to the happiness of the people, to whom they will have taught wisdom; then alone we shall be able to perceive the power of virtue, science, and authority, animated by a noble emulation, and working in concert for the happiness of mankind. But so long as power shall remain alone on one side, and genius and wisdom only on the other, the learned will seldom think of great things, Princes will more rarely do them, and the people will remain despicable, corrupted, and miserable.

LEGISLATORS.

THE man who dares to undertake to form a people, ought to feel himſelf capable of changing nature, ſo to ſpeak, of transforming each individual, who is of himſelf a perfect and ſolitary whole, in part of a greater whole, from which this individual receives, in ſome degree, his life and exiſtence. He ſhould likewiſe have the power of changing the conſtitution of man, in order to ſtrengthen it; to ſubſtitute a partial and moral exiſtence for that phyſical and independant one which we have received from Nature. In a word, he muſt take from man his natural powers, and ſubſtitute others unknown to him before, and which he cannot employ without aſſiſtance. In proportion as his natural powers are deadened and annihilated, his acquired ones become ſtrong and durable; the more too, the inſtitution becomes ſolid and perfect: ſo that if each citizen is nothing of himſelf, and has no power but in conjunction with the reſt, and if the force acquired by the whole be equal or ſuperior to the natural forces of every ſeparate individual combined, the legiſlation may then

then be ſaid to be in the higheſt degree of perfection it is capable of attaining.

If it be true that a great prince is an uncommon man, what is then a great legiſlator? The firſt has nothing to do but to follow the model, which it is the other's buſineſs to form; one is the mechanic who invents the machine, the other is the workman who winds it and ſets it agoing.

The ancient legiſlators uſed to put their deciſions in the mouths of the gods, in order to influence, by divine authority, thoſe who would not be governed by human prudence: but it is not every man who knows how to make the gods ſpeak, nor who is believed when he announces himſelf their interpreter. The capacious mind of the legiſlator is the true miracle which ought to prove his miſſion. Every man may engrave tables of ſtone, or pu chaſe an oracle, or feign a ſecret commerce with ſome deity, or teach a bird to whiſper in his ear, or find ſome other palpable cheat to impoſe on the vulgar. He who knows only theſe methods may by chance aſſemble a troop of madmen, but he will never found an empire; and his extravagant work will ſoon periſh with himſelf. Idle faſcinations can have only a tranſient hold, wiſdom alone a permanent one. The Jewiſh law which ſtill exiſts, that of the deſcendant of Iſhmael, which has governed half the world for ten centuries, announce to this day, the great men who invented them; and while

oſtentatious philoſophy, or the blind ſpirit of party, perceives in them nothing but ſucceſsful impoſtors; the true politician admires in their inſtitutions that great and powerful genius which preſides over durable eſtabliſhments.

A people never become famous till their legiſlation begins to decline. We are ignorant for how many ages the laws of Lycurgus contributed to the happineſs of the Spartans before that people was known to the reſt of Greece.

Of LAWS.

MEN are indebted for juſtice and liberty to the exiſtence of Law. This organic force, repreſenting the univerſal will, eſtabliſhes, in juſtice, the natural equality among men. This celeſtial voice dictates to every citizen, the precepts of public wiſdom, and teaches him to act according to the maxims of his own judgement, and never to be at variance with himſelf. It is this too which ought to ſpeak when the governors iſſue their commands. For ſo ſoon as one man independently of the laws, pretends to make another ſubmit to his private will, he immediately ſteps aſide from civil ſociety, and ſtands before him, in the pure ſtate of nature, where obedience is never preſcribed but by neceſſity.

The law that is abuſed, ſerves as an offenſive weapon to the powerful, and a ſhield againſt the weak. The pretence of the public good is the moſt dangerous ſcourge to a people.

What is moſt neceſſary and perhaps moſt difficult in a government, is an inflexible integrity that renders juſtice to all, and protects the poor againſt the tyranny of the rich. The greateſt harm is already done, when there are poor to defend, and

rich to reſtrain. It is upon people in a middling ſtation, that the whole force of the law is exerciſed. It is equally impotent againſt the treaſures of the rich, and the miſeries of the poor. The firſt elude, the ſecond eſcape it; the one breaks the net, the other ſlips through it.

Any condition that is equally impoſed on every man by all men, can never be diſagreeable to any, and the worſt law is ſtill better than the beſt maſter; for every maſter has partialities, law never has any.

Liberty always ſhares the fate of law: they reign or periſh together. The more you multiply laws, the more you render them contemptible; it is introducing freſh abuſes, without correcting the paſt; and all the inſpectors whom you appoint, are only freſh tranſgreſſors, deſtined to take a ſhare with the former, or to plunder by themſelves. The rewards of virtue ſoon become thoſe of robbery. The moſt unprincipled men, are held in the greateſt reputation: the higher their ſtation, the more deſpicable they become, their dignities render their infamy the more conſpicuous, and they are diſhonored by their honors. If they purchaſe the approbation of the great, or the protection of women, it is to ſell in their turn juſtice, duty, and the ſtate; while the people, who perceive not that their misfortunes originate from their vices, exclaim in ſorrow; "all our misfortunes ariſe from "thoſe we pay to protect us from them."

No well-governed ſtate will ever tolerate any partialities of law, on any pretence whatever. Even thoſe citizens who have merited rewards from their country, ſhould be recompenſed with honors, and never with privileges; for the republic is on the eve of its ruin, whenever any body dares to think, that there is ſomething great in being exempt from the laws. The moſt important of all laws, that which is neither engraved on marble nor braſs, but in the hearts of the people, which forms the real conſtitution of the ſtate, which gains every day new ſtrength, which when other laws become old or extinct, re-animates or ſupplies their place, which preſerves a people in the ſpirit of its inſtitution, and inſenſibly ſubſtitutes the force of habit, to that of authority; this law ſo powerful and ſtrong is morals, cuſtoms, and particularly opinion. Our politicians are totally unacquainted with this part of legiſlation, upon which hangs the ſucceſs of all the reſt; but the great Legiſlator conſiders it in ſecret, while he appears to confine himſelf to particular regulations which are only the mould of that arch, whereof morals, more ſlow in their growth form at laſt the immoveable key ſtone.

Of

Of Arbitrary Power.

WHEN will men perceive that there is no evil ſo dreadful as arbitrary power, by which they hope to remove evil? This power is of itſelf the worſt of all evils: and to employ ſuch a method of prevention, is like killing people to preſerve them from having a fever.

Of LIBERTY.

It is the ſame with liberty as with innocence, and virtue; their value is only felt while we poſſeſs them, for when they are loſt, all taſte for them is at the ſame time loſt. I am acquainted with the pleaſures of your country, ſaid Braſidas, to a Satrap, who compared Sparta with Perſepolis, but you cannot be acquainted with the pleaſures of mine.

Slaves loſe every thing in their fetters, even the deſire of being freed from them; they love their ſervitude, as the companions of Ulyſſes loved their brutiſhneſs. It is very difficult to reduce thoſe to obedience who do not aim at commanding, and the moſt dexterous policy would be unequal to the taſk of ſujecting men, who only deſired to be free. But difference of rank takes place eaſily among ambitious, and mean ſouls, who are always ready to run every riſk of fortune, and to command and ſerve indifferently, juſt as fortune is propitious to them or not.

There are few men whoſe hearts are fitted to love liberty. All want to command, and upon thoſe

thoſe terms do not fear to obey. An upſtart will ſerve a hundred maſters to get ten valets: We need only obſerve the haughty demeanor of the nobility in monarchies, with what emphaſis they pronounce the words of *ſervice*, and of *ſerving*; how great and reſpectable they eſteem themſelves, when they can have the honor of ſaying the *King* my *maſter*: how much they deſpiſe the republicans who are only free, but who are certainly much nobler than themſelves.

It is an indiſputable, as well as the fundamental maxim of all political right, that the people have elected themſelves rulers to defend their rights, but not to ſubject them. If we have a prince, ſaid Pliny to Trajan, it is, that he may preſerve us from having a maſter.

To give up liberty, is to give up the character of man, the rights of humanity, and even our duty. Nothing can make amends to him who renounces every thing: ſuch a renunciation is incompatible with the nature of man; and to take away all freedom from his will, is to deſtroy all the morality of his actions.

The lawyers who have gravely pronounced, that the child of a ſlave is born a ſlave, have decided, only, in other terms, that a man is not born a man.

Man acquires in the civil ſtate, moral liberty, which renders him truly maſter of himſelf, for the

the impulſe of his paſſions alone is ſlavery; and obedience to the laws we preſcribe ourſelves is liberty.

It is in proportion to the ſtrength of a ſtate, that its members are free.

Of

Of DEPENDENCE.

THERE are two ſorts of dependence, that of things, which is of nature; that of men, which is of ſociety. The dependence of things, having no morality, is not prejudicial to liberty, and begets no vices: the dependence of men being unruly produces them all; and is the cauſe that the maſter and ſlave mutually corrupt each other. If there be any method of remedying this evil in ſociety, it is by ſubſtituting law to man, and arming the public will with a real force, ſuperior to the activity of every private will. If the laws of nations could, like thoſe of nature, have an inflexibility, that no human force was able to overcome, the dependence of man would then again be that of things; we ſhould re-unite in the republic all the advantages of the natural and poliſhed ſtate; and we ſhould join to Liberty, which preſerves men from vices, morality, which ſtimulates him to virtue.

Of WAR.

WAR is not the relation of one man to another man, but of one ſtate to another ſtate; in which, individuals are only accidental enemies, not as men, nor even as fellow-citizens, but as ſoldiers; not as members of their country, but as the defenders of it. In ſhort, every ſtate can only have other ſtates for its enemies, and not men, becauſe that between things of a different nature, we can ſtate no true relation.

This principle is even conformable to the eſtabliſhed maxims of all times, and to the conſtant practice of all civilized people. The declarations of war are leſs meant to warn the ſovereign, than his ſubjects. Foreigners, whether Kings or private perſons, or even a whole people, who plunder, kill, or detain the ſubjects of a Prince, without having declared war againſt him, are not fair enemies, but robbers. Even in open war, a juſt Prince takes poſſeſſion in his enemy's country, of all that belongs to the public: but he reſpects the property and perſons of private individuals. He reſpects thoſe rights upon which his own are founded. The end of the war, being an end of all hoſtility, we have

have only a right to deſtroy its defenders while they carry arms, but whenever they lay them down and ſurrender, they are no longer enemies, nor inſtruments of the enemy, they reſume the title of men, and we have no longer any right over their lives.

Sometimes we may deſtroy a ſtate without deſtroying one of its members: War, therefore, gives no further power than what is neceſſary to accompliſh its end.

Of

Of Finances and Taxes.

THE moſt important maxim in the adminiſtration of Finances, is, to endeavour with much more care to prevent exigencies, than to augment the revenues. Ancient governments effected more by their parſimony than ours do by all their treaſures. All the books and accounts of the managers of the public revenue, ſerve leſs to diſcloſe their peculations than to ſcreen them: and prudence is never ſo ready in inventing new precautions, as fraud is in eluding them. Abandon, then, regiſters and papers, and commit the care of the Finances to faithful hands: this is the only way of having them faithfully managed. Virtue is the only efficacious inſtrument in this delicate part of adminiſtration, other things being equal. The man who is ten times richer than another, ought to pay ten times more than he. The man who has only a bare ſufficiency, ought to pay nothing at all. And the tax of him who has more than enough, may take in the full amount of his ſuperfluity.

Some people may ſay, that in conſideration of his rank, that which might be a ſuperfluity to his inferiors, is neceſſary to him: but this is falſe; for a great man has two legs, like a clown; and like him

him too has but one belly. And further, this pretended neceſſary revenue is ſo unneceſſary to his rank, that if he knew how to renounce it on any laudable occaſion, he would only render himſelf the more reſpected. The people would proſtrate themſelves before a Miniſter who went to the council on foot, becauſe he had ſold his carriages in an exigency of the State. In ſhort, there is no law that preſcribes magnificence to any one; and convenience can never be urged againſt right.

Let heavy taxes be laid upon ſervants, equipages, ſilk, and gildings; upon all the courts and gardens of great houſes; upon public places of all ſorts; upon all idle profeſſions, ſuch as dancers, ſingers, buffoons; and, in ſhort, upon all the numerous objects of luxury, amuſement, and idleneſs, which ſtrike all eyes, and which cannot be concealed; becauſe they would be totally uſeleſs if they were not ſeen. There is no fear, that ſuch taxes ſhould be thought arbitrary and uncertain, becauſe founded on things that are not abſolutely neceſſary; it betrays a very limited knowledge of mankind, to ſuppoſe, that after they have once ſuffered themſelves to be ſeduced by luxury, they can ever renounce it. They would a thouſand times ſooner deprive themſelves of real neceſſaries, and would ſooner die with hunger than ſhame. The increaſe of expence would only be a freſh inducement to ſupport it; when the vanity of appearing opulent would be increaſed by the additional

ditional price of the thing, and the expence of the tax.

So long as there are any rich people, they will diſtinguiſh themſelves from the poor; and the State can never form a leſs burdenſome, nor more ſure revenue, than on that diſtinction. Induſtry, for the ſame reaſon, would not ſuffer from an œconomical regulation, which would enrich the finances, and revive agriculture, by leſſening the toil of the labourer; and imperceptibly level all fortunes to that mediocrity from which a State derives its real ſtrength. I confeſs, that taxes might contribute to make ſome faſhions leſs durable; but others would quickly be ſubſtituted, in which the workman would find his profit, without the Exchequer being a loſer. In a word, let us ſuppoſe, that the ſpirit of Government ſhould conſtantly impoſe taxes upon the ſuperfluity of the rich: in this caſe, there would happen one of theſe two things, either the rich will retrench their ſuperfluous expences, and confine themſelves to ſuch only as are uſeful, and which will turn to the advantage of the State: theſe taxes will then have produced the effect of the beſt ſumptuary laws; the expences of the State will neceſſarily diminiſh, with thoſe of individuals; and if the revenues of the treaſury are leſſened by theſe means, yet its expences will likewiſe be leſſened: or, if the rich retrench nothing from their extravagance, the treaſury will receive in the produce of the taxes, thoſe reſources

which

which it ſought for, to provide for the real exigencies of the State. The Treaſury, in the firſt place, enriches itſelf by the retrenchment of its expences; in the ſecond, it enriches itſelf by the uſeleſs expences of individuals.

It appears to me certain, that all things which are not proſcribed by the laws, nor hurtful to morals, and which Government has a right to prohibit, it may from the ſame right tolerate. If, for example, Government may interdict the uſe of carriages, it may, from a ſtronger reaſon, impoſe a tax on them, which would be a wiſe and uſeful way of blaming their uſe, without totally aboliſhing them. We might then conſider this tax as a ſort of fine, the produce of which made amends for the abuſe which it puniſhes.

There are people who have been raſh enough to ſay, that it is neceſſary to tax the labourer, and that he would be idle if he had nothing to pay. But experience refutes in every country this abſurd maxim. The ground is beſt cultivated in Holland and in England, where the labourers pay but little; and particularly in China, where they pay nothing at all. On the contrary, in every place where the farmer is taxed in proportion to the produce of his ground, he leaves it untilled, or juſt cultivates enough for his own ſubſiſtence. For the man who loſes the fruits of his labours, is a gainer by doing nothing; and

and taxing labour is a very ſingular method of baniſhing idleneſs.

If we ſay, that there is nothing ſo dangerous as a tax paid by the purchaſer, as is practiſed in China, a country where the taxes are heavier, and better paid than any other in the world, how are we ſo blind, as not to perceive that the evil is a thouſand times greater, when the tax is paid by the labourer. Is not this to make an attempt againſt the life of the State, even at its ſource? is it not labouring, as much as poſſible, to depopulate the country, and conſequently to ruin it in the end? For there is no greater calamity that can befal a nation, than a want of men.

Of LUXURY.

LUXURY corrupts both the rich who poſſeſs, and the poor who covet it.

Like the ſcorching winds of the ſouth, that cover the graſs with devouring inſects, deſtroy the ſubſiſtence of uſeful animals, and carry famine and death in every place where they go, Luxury, in every ſtate, whether ſmall or great, oppreſſes and preys upon the labourer and citizen, to ſupport a tribe of valets and miſerable beings of its own creation. Under the pretence of feeding the poor, who ought not to have been made poor, it impoveriſhes the reſt, and, ſooner or later, depopulates the State.

In proportion as induſtry and the lucrative arts extend and flouriſh, the moſt uſeful, ſuch as agriculture, muſt neceſſarily be neglected: the conſequence of which is, that the farmer being deſpiſed, and oppreſſed with taxes, which are neceſſary to the ſupport of luxury, and condemned to paſs his life between labour and hunger, forſakes his fields

to

to ſeek for bread in the towns, which he ought to have ſupplied with it. Lands remain uncultivated; the high roads ſwarm with miſerable people who become beggars or thieves, and are deſtined one day or other to end their miſeries on a rack or dung-hill. Such are the true effects which reſult from the progreſs of induſtry and luxury; ſuch are the ſenſible cauſes of all the miſeries into which opulence precipitates the moſt admired nations: it is thus that the State, enriching itſelf on one ſide, is weakened and impoveriſhed on the other; and that the moſt powerful monarchies, after taking a great deal of pains to render themſelves opulent and deſerted, become at laſt the prey of poor nations, who yield to the temptation of invading them.—Vanity and idleneſs have given birth to ſciences and luxury. A taſte for luxury always accompanies that of letters; and the taſte of letters often accompanies that of luxury *.

Luxury may be neceſſary to give bread to the poor; but if there was no luxury, there would be no poor.

* In proportion as luxury corrupts morals, (ſays a modern author) the ſciences ſoften them; like thoſe prayers in Homer, which are conſtantly flying over the earth, in purſuit of Injuſtice, to ſoften the cruelty of that cruel Deity.

Luxury ſerves to ſupport a State, as pillars ſerve to uphold the palaces that they decorate, or rather like the beams with which old buildings are propt, and which quite overſet them. Every wiſe and prudent man ſhould quit a houſe that is propt.

Luxury feeds a hundred poor people in our towns, and cauſes a hundred thouſand to periſh in the country; the money that circulates through the hands of the rich, and artiſts, to purchaſe ſuperfluities, is loſt to the uſe of the labourer; and theſe latter want a coat, preciſely becauſe the former wear laced ones. The waſte of things that might ſerve to feed the hungry, is alone ſufficient to render luxury odious to humanity. Our kitchens muſt be ſupplied with gravies; this is the reaſon that ſo many poor ſick people often want broth. Peaſants drink nothing but water, becauſe our tables muſt be ſupplied with liquors: the poor want bread, becauſe our hair muſt be powdered.

If we were only to conſult the moſt natural impreſſions, it would ſeem, that in order to deſpiſe luxury and ſhew, moderation is leſs required than taſte. Regularity and ſymmetry pleaſe all eyes; the picture of felicity and good order pleaſes the human heart, which naturally covets it: but what favourable idea can a vain pomp, which has no relation to order or happineſs, create of him who diſplays it, in the mind of the ſpectator? The idea of taſte! Is

not

not taſte much better diſplayed in every thing ſimple, than in every thing gaudy? The idea of convenience! Is there any thing more inconvenient than pomp? The idea of greatneſs! It is exactly the contrary.

Whenever I ſee a large palace, I immediately aſk myſelf, why is not that palace larger?—The man who has fifty ſervants, why has he not a hundred? That beautiful diſh, why is it not of gold? The man who gilds his carriage, why does he not gild his ceilings? If his ceilings are gilt, why is not his roof? Thoſe who attempted to build a high tower, were very right in endeavouring to make it reach the ſky; otherwiſe it would have been in vain to build; the point at which they ſtopt, would only have further demonſtrated their impotence.

Oh, weak and vain man! ſhew me thy power, and I will point out thy miſery! On the contrary, a ſyſtem, where nothing is ſacrificed to opinion, where its true utility, and its agreement with the real wants of nature, preſents a ſight, not only approved by reaſon, but grateful to the eye and heart; becauſe man views himſelf in it only under agreeable affinities, as being ſufficient to himſelf; the image of his weakneſs is not conſpicuous; and this ſmiling picture never excites any melancholy reflections.

I defy any man to contemplate for an hour the palace of a prince, and the pomp that reigns in it, without becoming melancholy, and deploring the fate of human nature.

Of

Of Riches and Rich People.

ALL rich people value money more than merit. In the comparative value of money, and ſervices, they always reckon, that the latter are not equivalent to the former, and think that a man ſtill owes them a balance, after having paſſed his life in ſerving them, for a bare ſubſiſtance. Thoſe who love riches are made to ſerve: thoſe who diſpiſe them, to command. The power of money ſubjects not the poor to the rich, but the deſire which the poor have of getting rich in their turn: for were it not for that, they would inevitably be the maſters.

Poor people groan under the yoke of the rich, and rich people under the yoke of prejudices. Riches do not make people rich, ſays the romance of the Roſe. The riches of a man are not in his coffers, but in the uſe which he makes of what he takes out of them. For we only appropriate to ourſelves thoſe things which we poſſeſs, by the manner in which we employ them. But the various ways which are in our power of abuſing them, are more inexhauſtible than riches: Which is the

reaſon that our enjoyments are not proportioned to the ſums we expend, but to the manner in which we expend them. A fool may fling ingots of gold and ſilver into the ſea, and ſay that he derives pleaſure from that action; but what compariſon is there between this extravagant enjoyment, and thoſe which a wiſe man would have derived from much ſmaller means? There is no ſuch thing as abſolute riches. The word only ſignifies a relation of ſuperabundance, between the deſires and faculties of the rich man. Some are rich, with only an acre of land; while others are poor in the midſt of their treaſures. Whims and diſſipation have no limits, and make more poor people than our real wants. Whoever enjoys good health, and is not in the want of the neceſſaries of life; if he can baniſh capricious deſires from his heart, is rich enough. This is the *aurea mediocritas* of Horace.

BEG-

BEGGARS.

BY feeding beggars, we only contribute to increaſe the number of vagabonds, who love that idle trade, who become a burden to ſociety, and deprive it likewiſe of the labour they might perform. Such are the maxims, with which your pleaſant philoſophers love to flatter the inſenſibility of the rich.

We tolerate and ſupport, at a great expence, a number of uſeleſs profeſſions, many of which ſerve only to corrupt and deſtroy morals. If we conſider the profeſſion of begging only as a trade, far from having any ſuch danger to fear, we find only that it tends to ſtrengthen the ſentiments of tenderneſs and humanity, which ought to unite all men. And even if we conſider it as a talent, why ſhould not I reward the eloquence of that beggar, who touches my heart, and induces me to ſuccour him, as I pay a player who cauſes me to ſhed a few unmeaning tears. If the latter makes me love the good actions of other people, the former incites me to do good myſelf. All the tender feelings excited by the repreſentation of a tragedy, are forgotten, the inſtant it is over; but

the recollection of the indigent whom we have relieved, cauſes a ſecret ſatisfaction which is every moment renewed. If many beggars are burdenſome to a ſtate, of how many other profeſſions that are encouraged and tolerated, may we not ſay the ſame. The King ſhould prevent the increaſe of beggars; but muſt he render his people inhuman, and unnatural, in order to make them ſick of their profeſſion? For my part, without conſidering what the poor are to the ſtate, I know that they are all my brethren; and that I cannot without an unpardonable hardheartedneſs, refuſe them the ſlender help which they crave. I acknowledge that the greater part of them are vagabonds, but I am too well acquainted with the miſeries of this life, to be ignorant of the various misfortunes which may reduce an honeſt man to that ſtate; and how can I be certain that the ſtranger, who comes to implore my aſſiſtance, in the name of God, and aſk a poor morſel of bread, may not be that honeſt man periſhing with miſery, whom my refuſal may drive to deſpair? Though the alms we beſtow may only be a temporary relief, it is at leaſt a teſtimony, that we participate in their misfortunes, which ſoftens the cruelty of a refuſal, and is a mark of civility paid them; a trifling piece of money, or a ſmall bit of bread, coſt little, and are a kinder anſwer than *God help you:* as if the gifts of God were not in the hands of men; as if

there

there were any other granaries in the world than the ſtorehouſes of the rich. In ſhort, whatever may be our opinion of theſe miſerable beings, if we owe nothing to the wretch who begs, at leaſt it is a reſpect we owe ourſelves, to relieve the ſufferings of human nature, or of our own likeneſs, and not to harden our hearts againſt the ſight of miſery.

The calumniators of charity alledge, that the exerciſe of it is of no uſe, but to eſtabliſh nurſeries of thieves. The effect is, however, quite contrary: it prevents them from becoming ſo. I grant that it would be bad policy to encourage poor people to become beggars; but when they are once reduced to that ſtate, it is neceſſary to ſupport them for fear they ſhould become robbers. Nothing is ſo great an inducement for a man to change his profeſſion, as the want of ability to ſupport himſelf by it. Therefore, all thoſe who have once got a reliſh for this idle trade, take ſuch an averſion to labour, that they would rather ſteal and be hanged, than again make uſe of their hands. A farthing is ſoon aſked, and as ſoon refuſed; but twenty farthings would pay the ſupper of a poor man, whom twenty refuſals may render deſperate. Who would ever withhold ſo trifling an alms, if he reflected that it might ſave two men; one from a crime, and the other from death. I have ſomewhere read, that the beggars are a vermin that

ſtick to the rich. It is natural, that children ſhould attach themſelves to their parents. But thoſe opulent and cruel parents refuſe to own them, and leave to the poor the care of ſupporting them.

Of

Of SUICIDE.

YOU would ceaſe to live; but I ſhould be very glad to know if you have begun. What! was you placed upon earth for no purpoſe? Has not Heaven, with life, given you a taſk for the employment of life? If you have completed your taſk before night, repoſe yourſelf the reſt of the day. But let us ſee your work. What anſwer have you got ready for the Supreme Judge, who will aſk an account of your time? Wretched mortal! Shew me the good man who boaſts of having lived long enough, that I may learn of him in what manner he has paſſed his life, to have acquired the right of relinquiſhing it.

You reflect on the various misfortunes that are incident to human nature, and you ſay, life is an evil: but look into the order of things, and ſee if you can find any happineſs without a mixture of pain. Is this a reaſon for ſaying there is nothing good in the world? and can we confound what is evil in its nature, with what only ſuffers evil by chance? The paſſive life of man is nothing, and has no relation to any thing but his body, of which burden he will ſoon be relieved; but his active and moral life, which ought to have an influence on his

his whole exiſtence, conſiſts in the exerciſe of his will. Life is an evil to the wicked who proſper, and a bleſſing to the worthy who are unfortunate; for it is not a tranſitory modification, but its relation to its object that renders it good or evil.

You are weary of living, and you ſay life is an evil. You will ſooner or later be freed from it, and you will ſay life is a bleſſing. You will ſpeak with more truth, without uſing better arguments. For nothing will have changed but yourſelf. Begin then to change from this day; and ſince all the evil conſiſts in the bad diſpoſition of your heart, correct your bad propenſities; and do not burn your houſe, to ſave you the trouble of putting it in order.

What are twenty or thirty years, to an immortal being? pain and pleaſure paſs as a ſhade. Life ſlips away in a moment: it is nothing of itſelf; its value depends upon the uſe we make of it. The good which we do remains, and it is that alone which renders life valuable. Never more, therefore, ſay, that exiſtence is an evil for you, as it depends on yourſelf alone to make it a bleſſing; and if you have found it evil, that is an additional reaſon to continue to live. Never ſay that you have a right to put an end to your life; for you might as well ſay that it is permitted to you to revolt againſt the Author of your exiſtence, and to cheat fate.

Suicide

Suicide is a cowardly and ſhameful death. It is a theft on mankind. Before you take leave of the reſt of your fellow creatures, return what they have done for you. You reply, I have no ties; I am of no uſe in the world. Thou philoſopher of a day! Art thou ignorant that thou canſt not take one ſtep in the world, without finding ſome duty to fulfil, and that every man is uſeful to ſociety, merely becauſe he exiſts?

Raſh youth! If there remain in the bottom of thy heart the leaſt ſpark of virtue, come, that I may teach thee to love life. Every time that thou art tempted to quit it, only ſay within thyſelf, let me do another good action before I die. Then go and ſeek an indigent perſon to relieve, an unfortunate object to conſole, or an oppreſſed being to defend. If this conſideration withhold thee to-day, it will to-morrow, the day after, and all thy life. If it fail, thou art only a wretch——die!

DUELS.

BEWARE of confounding the ſacred name of honour, with that brutal prejudice which puts every virtue to the point of the ſword, and ſerves only to make brave ſcoundrels.

In what does this prejudice conſiſt? In the moſt barbarous and extravagant opinion that ever entered the human mind; namely, that courage may ſupply the place of all the duties of ſociety; that a man is no longer a cheat, a knave, a ſlanderer, but civil, humane, and polite; that lies become truths, thefts lawful, treachery, honeſty, and infidelity commendable, ſo long as he can maintain all this, ſword in hand. That the beſt reparation for an affront, is a ſtab, and that we are never to blame with any man, provided we kill him. There is, I confeſs, another kind of encounter, which mixes gentility with cruelty, and in which the duel terminates with the firſt blood that is drawn.—The firſt blood! great God! And what would you do with the firſt blood, ſavage beaſt? would you drink it? Did ever any of the moſt valiant men of antiquity, once think of revenging their perſonal injuries by duels? Did Cæſar ever ſend a challenge

to

to Cato, or Pompey to Cæſar, for all the affronts they reciprocally gave each other? And was the greateſt commander of Greece diſhonoured, for having ſuffered himſelf to be threatened with a cudgel? It may be alledged, that as times change ſo do manners. But are they all equally ſalutary? and may we not venture to inquire, whether the manners of the times are ſuch as are ſtrictly compatible with true honor? No, honor is immutable, it depends not on prejudices; it can neither be extinguiſhed nor revived; but has its eternal ſource in the heart of the juſt man, and in the invariable rule of his duties. If duels were unknown to the wiſeſt, the braveſt and moſt virtuous people on earth, I maintain, that it is not an honourable inſtitution, but an abominable, cruel faſhion, worthy of its barbarous origin. It remains to be diſcovered, whether an honeſt man, when his own life, or that of a fellow creature, is at ſtake, ſhould be biaſſed by faſhion, and whether there would not be more courage in braving, than yielding to it. How would that man act who is a ſlave to ſuch a prejudice, in a country where contrary cuſtoms reign?

At Meſſina or Naples, he would be obliged to wait in the corner of a ſtreet for his enemy, and ſtab him behind, becauſe ſuch a proceeding is ſtiled courage in that country: and they do not make

honor

honor conſiſt in giving our enemy a chance of deſtroying us, but in killing him ourſelves.

The upright man whoſe whole life has been irreproachable, and who never gave any proofs of cowardice, would be the more honored for refuſing to ſtain himſelf with murder. Always ready to ſerve his country, to protect the feeble, to fulfil the moſt hazardous duties, and to defend, even with his blood, all that are dear to him, in every juſt and honorable re-encounter, he ſhews in his proceedings that ſteady and unſhaken reſolution, which is never poſſeſſed without true courage. Secure in the rectitude of his own conſcience, he walks without fear, and neither avoids nor ſeeks his enemy. We may eaſily perceive that he is leſs afraid of death than of a bad action; and that he dreads the crime, but not the danger.

If any infamous prejudices ariſe for a moment againſt him, all the days of his honorable and well-ſpent life, are ſo many witneſſes that confound them; and in ſo uniform a conduct, we judge of one action by all the reſt.

Your ſuſpicious and quarrelſome men, who are always ready to give affronts, are in general brutes, who, fearful of being publicly ſhewn the contempt they are held in, endeavour to cover, by ſome affair of honor, the infamy of their whole lives. Such people always make one effort to acquire a name, that they may have a right of concealing

cealing themſelves the reſt of their lives. True courage is more conſtant and leſs eager; it is always what it ought to be; it muſt neither be ſtimulated nor reſtrained. The worthy carry it every where with them; into battle, againſt the enemy: in company to defend truth, and the abſent; in their beds to teach them to ſupport pain and death. The ſtrength of ſoul which inſpires it, always exiſts. It continually places virtue above events, and does not conſiſt in fighting, but in fearing nothing.

IN-

INTOXICATION.

INTEMPERANCE of every kind is vicious, and particularly that which deprives us of the nobleſt of our faculties. Intoxication degrades man, alienates his reaſon, at leaſt for a time, and ſtupifies him in the end. The love of wine, is not, however, a crime; it is ſeldom the author of any; it makes a man ſtupid, but not baſe. For one trifling quarrel that it ſometimes creates, it forms a hundred laſting attachments. Drinkers, in general, are warm hearted and open: they are almoſt all worthy, upright, juſt, faithful, brave, and honeſt people, with the exception of this one weakneſs.

How many real vices are hidden by apparent virtues? The ſage is ſober through temperance, the impoſtor is ſober through duplicity.

In a country where the morals of the people are bad, where intrigues, adulteries, and treacheries abound; they dread a ſtate of indiſcretion, which lays the heart involuntarily open. All thoſe people who deteſt drunkenneſs moſt, have the greateſt reaſon to preſerve themſelves from it. It is rather eſteemed in Swiſſerland, and abhorred at Naples.

But

But which is in reality the moſt to be feared, the intemperance of the Swiſs, or the reſerve of the Italian?

Do no let us blacken this vice. Is it not ſufficiently deformed of itſelf? Wine does not make us vicious, it only diſcovers our vices. The man who killed Clitus, when drunk, put Philoctetes to death, in cool blood. If drunkenneſs, has its phrenſies, what paſſion is without them. The difference is, that others are concealed in the bottom of the ſoul, and that this kindles and dies in a moment. If we except thoſe ſallies of violence which are tranſient and eaſily avoided, we may reſt aſſured, that the man who commits wicked actions when drunk, conceals bad deſigns when ſober.

DISEASES.

THE extreme difference in our manner of living, excefs of idlenefs in fome, excefs of labour in others; the facility with which our appetites are excited and fatisfied: The luxurious food of the rich, which heats their blood and cauſes indigeſtions: The homely and coarſe food of the poor which they often want, and therefore overload their ſtomachs when they have an opportunity; ſitting up; excefs of every kind; the immoderate indulgence of all the paſſions; the fatigues of the mind; the innumerable afflictions and pains, which are felt in every ſtate, and which continually prey upon our ſouls; theſe are the melancholy vouchers, that the greater part of our misfortunes originate in ourſelves, and that we ſhould have avoided almoſt all of them, if we had followed the ſimple uniform and retired manner of living preſcribed us by nature. If nature has decreed that we ſhould be found in body and mind, I will venture to aſſert, that a ſtate of reflexion is a ſtate contrary to nature, and that a man of meditation is a depraved animal.

All our moral evils exiſt entirely in opinion, and

and that depends on ourſelves. Our phyſical evils are either deſtroyed or deſtroy us; time or death are our remedies; we ſuffer the more for not knowing how to ſuffer, and we often give ourſelves more pain to cure our diſeaſes, than we ſhould have to ſupport them.

Phyſic

Phyſic and Phyſicians.

A Debilitated body weakens the ſoul. On this is founded the empire of medicine, an art more pernicious to man than all the ills it pretends to cure. For my own part, I know not of what diſorders, phyſicians cure us; but I know this, that they give ſome which are very fatal, ſuch as cowardice, puſillanimity, credulity, and the fear of death. If they cure our body, they kill courage. What is the importance of enabling carcaſſes to walk? It is man that we want, and we never ſee any come from under their hands.

Phyſic is in faſhion among us, and ſo it ſhould. It is the amuſement of idle people, who being at a loſs how to employ their time, paſs it in trying to preſerve their exiſtence. If they had had the misfortune of being born immortal, they would have been the moſt miſerable of all beings. For they would have ſet no value upon a life which they could have no fear of loſing. Theſe people muſt have Phyſicians who threaten in order to flatter them, and who adminiſter to them each day the only pleaſure they are ſuſceptible of, which is that of not being dead.

Men

Men make uſe of the ſame ſophiſtry upon the uſe of medicine, as they do in their ſearch after truth. They always ſuppoſe, that by treating a caſe it is cured, and that by ſeeking a truth, it is found. They do not perceive that we muſt balance the advantage of one cure, which the Phyſician performs, with the death of a hundred ſick people that he has killed: and the utility of one diſcovered truth, with the miſchief cauſed at the ſame time, by the errors under which men labour. Science which inſtructs, and medicine which cures, are both undoubtedly very good: but ſcience which deceives, and medicine which kills are bad. Teach us then how to diſcriminate them; there lies the difficulty of the queſtion. If we could be ſatisfied with what we already know, without ſeeking farther, we ſhould not be the dupes of falſhood, if we were not over anxious to be cured, in ſpite of nature, we ſhould never die by the hands of the Phyſician. Both theſe forbearances would be wiſe; we ſhould be evidently gainers in ſubmitting to them. I do not, however, diſpute, but that medicine may be uſeful to ſome men, I only ſay, that it i n gene-ral, fatal to mankind.

Some people will ſay, that the fault lays with the phyſician, and that phyſic itſelf is infallible; That may be; but let it then come without the Phyſician, for ſo long as they come together, there will be much more to fear from the errors of the

artiſt, than ought to be expected from the aſſiſtance of the art.

This deceitful art, better calculated to relieve the diſorders of the mind than of the body, is uſeful to neither. It is of leſs uſe to cure us of our diſorders, than to impreſs us with the dread of them. Inſtead of withholding the arm of death, it makes us feel his approaches. It wears out, inſtead of prolonging life, and if ſuch prolongation were poſſible, it would be to the prejudice of the human ſpecies, as it would keep us from ſociety by the cares laid upon us, and from our duties by the fears it created. The knowledge of danger makes us feel it: he that could think himſelf invulnerable, would be afraid of nothing. By arming Achilles againſt danger, the poet takes from him the merit of perſonal courage. Any other man in his place would have been an Achilles on the ſame terms. If you wiſh to find men of true courage, ſeek them in places where there are no phyſicians, where they are ignorant of the conſequences of diſeaſes, and where they ſeldom think of death. Man naturally knows how to ſuffer with magnanimity, and die in peace.

Phyſicians with their preſcriptions, philoſophers with their precepts, and prieſts with their exhortations, weaken our ſouls, and make us forget how to die.

The only uſeful part of medicine is *Hygiene*.

But

But even *Hygiene* is leſs a ſcience than virtue: temperance and labour are the two beſt phyſicians of men: labour ſharpens his appetite, and temperance prevents him from abuſing it.

If we do not find by general obſervations, that the uſe of medicine gives man better health or longer life; from the very reaſon that it is not uſeful, it is hurtful; ſince it cauſes a great loſs of time to man. A man who lives ten years without the aid of phyſicians, lives more for himſelf and for ſociety, than he who exiſts thirty years their victim.

Live according to nature, be patient and drive away phyſicians; you will not eſcape death, but you will feel it but once; while they would make it every day preſent to your imagination, and their deceitful art, inſtead of prolonging your days, would deprive you of all enjoyment. I ſhall endeavour to diſcover, however, of what real uſe this art is to mankind. Some few, among the few that it cures, might perhaps without their aſſiſtance have died; but the millions that it kills might have lived. All ye who are wiſe, venture nothing in this lottery, where there are too many chances againſt you: Suffer, die, or be cured; but above all, live to thy laſt hour.

Of LIFE.

TO live is not to breath, it is to act, 'tis to make uſe of our organs, of our ſenſes, of our faculties and of every part of ourſelves, which gives us the feeling of our exiſtence. The man who has counted the greateſt number of years, cannot be ſaid to have lived the longeſt, but thoſe who have moſt felt life. A man may have been buried at a hundred, who died at his birth; he would have been a gainer by dying young, at leaſt, he would have *lived* for ſome time. However ingenious we may be in, fomenting our miſeries by refinement, we have not been able to improve ourſelves to the point of rendering life a burden, and of preferring non-exiſtence to natural life; without which, depreſſion and deſpair, would have ſeized upon the greateſt number, and the human ſpecies could not long have exiſted. Therefore, if it be better for us to be than not to be, it is ſufficient to juſtify our exiſtence, if we even had no other indemnification to expect for the evils which are incident to us, even though theſe evils were as great as they are repreſented. But it is difficult to find ſincerity among men, on this ſubject, and juſt calculations

among philoſophers; becauſe the latter, in the compariſon they draw between good and evil, always forget the agreeable feeling of exiſtence, independent of every other ſenſation, and becauſe the vanity of being thought to deſpiſe death, induces the former to calumniate life, like thoſe women, who with ſpots upon their gowns, and ſciſſars in their hand, prefer holes to ſpots.

Few people, ſays Erasmus, would wiſh to begin their life again, upon the ſame conditions they have already lived: but thoſe who talk in this high ſtrain, would, perhaps, alter their note, if they had any proſpect of ſtriking the bargain. Beſides, who is it that talks in this manner? People, perhaps, who are ſatiated with falſe pleaſures, but who are ignorant of true, always weary of life, and yet always in dread of loſing it. Men of letters, perhaps, who of all orders of men are the moſt ſedentary, the moſt unhealthy, the moſt thinking, and conſequently the moſt unhappy. Would we find men of a better compoſition, or who are at leaſt more ſincere, and who, as they form the greateſt number, ought for that reaſon, to be heard in preference: let us conſult an honeſt man, who has paſſed an obſcure and quiet life, devoid of projects or ambition; or an honeſt mechanic who ſupports himſelf comfortably by his labour, a farmer even, but not in France, where they ſuppoſe that it is neceſſary to ſtarve them, to make us live;

but in a free country. I will venture to aſſert, that there is, perhaps, not one mountaineer in the upper Valais, diſcontent with his automatical life, and who would not willingly accept in lieu even of Paradiſe, the propoſal of being born again to vegetate thus perpetually. Theſe differences which we find among men, make me ſuppoſe that it is often the abuſe we make of life, which renders it a burden to us. And I have a much worſe opinion of thoſe who are ſorry that they ever exiſted, than of thoſe who can ſay with Cato, "I do not regret "having lived, becauſe I can teſtify to myſelf, "that I was not born in vain." This is no reaſon why the ſage may not quit this life, without murmuring or deſpairing, when nature or fortune peremptorily order him to depart.

DEATH.

IF we were immortal, we ſhould be very miſerable beings. 'Tis hard to die, but 'tis pleaſing to hope that we ſhall not always live, and that a better life will terminate the pains of this.

If we might obtain immortality upon earth, who would wiſh to avail himſelf of ſo mournful a privilege? What reſource, what hope, what conſolation, would be left us againſt the rigours of fate, or the injuſtice of men?

The limited and ignorant man has no foreſight, and he neither feels the value of life, nor is he in any fear of loſing it. But the man of enlightened underſtanding foreſees bleſſings of a higher value, which he prefers to life.

Imperfect knowledge and falſe wiſdom extend our views no farther than death, from whence our greateſt misfortunes originate. The neceſſity of dying is, to the wiſe man, a ſtrong reaſon to ſupport the pains of life. If we were not ſure of loſing it once, it would coſt too much to preſerve it.

We believe that man naturally poſſeſſes a lively ſenſe of ſelf-preſervation; this is true; but we do

not perceive that this love of life, which we feel, is, in a great measure, the work of men. Man naturally aims at his preservation, just as long as the means of it are in his power; whenever he loses those means, he becomes tranquil, and dies without tormenting himself to no purpose.

The first law of resignation is instilled in us by nature. Savages, as well as all kinds of animals, struggle little against death, and endure it almost without a murmur. When this principle is destroyed, others are formed, which are deduced from reason; but few know how to use them; and this factitious resignation is never so perfect as the former.

Our greatest errors arise from our giving too great an importance to life; as if our whole being depended on it, and as if, after death, we should be nothing. Our life is trifling in the eyes of God: it is nothing in the eyes of reason; it ought to be nothing in ours; and when we are divested of our bodies, we only lay aside a cumbersome dress.

There are events which strike more or less according to the aspect in which we consider them, and which lose a great deal of the horror they inspire, at first sight, when we consider them nearer.

Nature daily confirms me in the opinion, that an acce-

accelerated death is not always a real evil, and may ſometimes paſs for a relative good.

Many among the number of men, who were cruſhed under the ruins of Liſbon, undoubtedly eſcaped greater evils: and notwithſtanding that the deſcription of ſuch a calamity is very affecting, we are not certain that one of the unfortunate beings who periſhed ſuffered more than if he had met, according to the ordinary courſe of things, after a long and painful exiſtence, that death which overtook him. Can there be a more diſmal end than that of a dying perſon, oppreſſed with unneceſſary cares, whom lawyers and heirs hardly allow to breathe, and whom the phyſicians kill. I perceive every where, that the evils to which Nature has ſubjected us, are not half ſo cruel as thoſe which we bring upon ourſelves.

When we have ruined our conſtitution by an irregular courſe of life, we endeavour to reeſtabliſh it by drugs; to the ill we feel, we add that which we fear: the foreſight of death gives it an horrible aſpect, and accelerates it. The more we endeavour to fly from it, the more we feel it: and we die with fear during all our lives, murmuring againſt nature for thoſe evils which we have brought upon ourſelves by offending her.

To live free, and to ſet a moderate value upon all human poſſeſſions, is the beſt manner of learning how to die.

STUDY.

WHEN the habit of reflection begins to expand the underſtanding, it is always better to diſcover ourſelves the knowledge which may be learnt from books: this is the true ſecret of imprinting it in our memory, and of appropriating it to ourſelves.

The error of thoſe who ſtudy is truſting too much to their books, and not drawing enough from their own bottom. Without reflecting, that of all ſophiſts our own reaſon in general deceives us the leaſt, for we never enter into ourſelves without feeling what is right, and diſcerning what is beautiful; we have no need to be taught to diſtinguiſh the one or the other; and if we are deceived, it muſt be wilfully.

But examples of the good, and the beautiful, are more rare, and leſs known; we muſt ſeek them far from us. Vanity, proportioning the ſtrength of nature, according to our weakneſs, repreſents thoſe qualities which we feel not within ourſelves as chimerical. Idleneſs and vice repoſe themſelves upon this pretended impoſſibility; and what he is not every day a witneſs of, the weak man pretends is never

never to be ſeen. This error we muſt deſtroy; and thoſe ſublime objects we muſt accuſtom ourſelves to feel and to admire, that we may have no pretence for not imitating them. The ſoul is elevated, and the heart warmed in contemplating thoſe divine models: by continually keeping them in view we endeavour to become like them, and we can no longer ſee any thing little without diſguſt.

The mind, as well as the body, bears no more than it is able; when our underſtanding appropriates to itſelf the knowledge of things, before they are lodged in our memory, what it afterwards draws from them is its own; whereas, by overcharging the memory without the knowledge of the underſtanding, we run a riſque of never drawing any thing from it which is our own.

STUDY of the WORLD.

THE ſtudy of the world is full of difficulties, and it is difficult to know where we ought to live, in order to acquire a proper knowledge of it. The philoſopher is at too great a diſtance, the man of the world too near it—The one ſees too much to be able to reflect: the other too little to make a proper eſtimate of the whole. The philoſopher conſiders every object which ſtrikes him, ſingly; and not being able to diſcern its connections, or affinities, with other objects that are unknown to him, he never ſees it in its proper place, and neither feels the cauſe, nor its true effects. The man of the world ſees every thing, and has time to think of nothing. The mutability of objects only allows him time to perceive, not contemplate them; they rapidly efface each other, and he only retains confuſed ideas of the whole. We cannot alternately ſee it, and reflect on it, becauſe the ſcene requires an unbroken attention, which interrupts reflection. A man who wiſhes to divide his time by intervals, between the world and retirement, would find himſelf continually agitated in his ſolitude,

tude, and always a ſtranger in the world, and would be happy no where. There is no other method but to divide his life into two long intervals, the one to obſerve, the other to reflect; but even that is almoſt impoſſible; for our underſtanding is not a piece of furniture, which we can take up and ſet down again as it ſuits us. Whoever has lived ten years without thinking, will never think as long as he lives.

It is another piece of folly to wiſh to ſtudy the world, as an idle ſpectator. He who pretends to do nothing but obſerve, never obſerves any thing; becauſe, being uſeleſs in buſineſs, and troubleſome in amuſements, he is admitted no where. We cannot ſee others act, unleſs we act ourſelves. In the ſchool of the world, as well as in that of love, we muſt begin by practiſing what we wiſh to learn.

Of the Study of the Sciences.

AMONG ſo many admirable methods of abridging the ſtudy of the ſciences, we would be much the better of one, for learning them effectually.

The abuſe of books deſtroy Science.

Too much reading only makes preſumptuous, ignoramuſes. Books only teach people to talk of what they know nothing about.

There is no real progreſs of reaſon in the human ſpecies, becauſe all that we gain on the one hand, we loſe on the other; and that all underſtandings ſtart from the ſame point, and the time we employ in learning what others have thought, being ſo much time loſt in learning to think ourſelves, we have more acquired knowledge, but leſs ſtrength of genius and imagination. Our underſtandings are like our arms, accuſtomed to do every thing with tools, but nothing of themſelves. The more ingenious our tools are, the more our organs become clumſy and aukward. By continually aſſembling machines around us, we find none within ourſelves.

ARTS

ARTS and SCIENCES.

THE mind has its wants, as well as the body. Theſe are the baſis of ſociety, thoſe of its pleaſures.

Sciences, learning, and arts, perhaps leſs deſpotic, and yet more powerful than government, or laws, entwine garlands of flowers around the chains of iron, with which men are burdened, and ſtifle in them that ſentiment of original liberty, for which they ſeemed born, make them love their ſlavery, and form what is called a poliſhed people. Neceſſity raiſed thrones; ſcience and arts fixed them upon a firm foundation. Ye rulers of the earth, love and protect talents, and all thoſe who cultivate them. Ye poliſhed people, cultivate them! Happy ſlaves, it is to them you owe that delicate and refined taſte upon which you pride yourſelves, that ſoftneſs of character, and that urbanity of manners, which renders every intercourſe with you ſo eaſy and ſo binding; in a word, which gives you the appearance of every virtue, without the real poſſeſſion of any. There are ſome weak and puſillanimous ſouls that have neither heat nor fire

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in them, and which are only gentle from indifference for what is good or evil, which is the mildneſs with which the love of letters inſpires a people.

The more the inſide becomes corrupted, the more the outſide becomes apparently amiable. Thus the love of letters inſenſibly propagates politeneſs.

What dangers, what deceitful tracts, in the inveſtigation of ſciences! By how many errors, a thouſand times more dangerous than truth is uſeful, muſt we not paſs to reach her? The diſadvantage is viſible, for falſehood is ſuſceptible of an infinite number of combinations; but truth is uniform.

The abuſe of time is a great evil; but more fatal evils are produced by learning and arts. Learning is one, the child like them, of pomp and the vanity of men. Luxury is ſometimes the concomitant of ſciences and arts; but ſciences and arts are never unattended by luxury.

When men were innocent and virtuous, and loved to have the gods for witneſſes of their actions, they lived together in the ſame huts; but having ſoon become wicked, they grew tired of theſe ſpectators, and baniſhed them into magnificent temples; they afterwards drove them out, to ſettle there themſelves, or, at leaſt, the temples of the gods were no longer to be diſtinguiſhed from the houſes

houſes of the citizens. Depravity had then reached its ſummit, and vices were never puſhed ſo far as when they were ſeen, in a manner, ſupported at the entrance of the palaces of the great, upon pillars of marble, and engraved on Corinthian chaptiers.

Oh, Fabricius! What would thy great ſoul have thought, if unfortunately recalled to life, thou hadſt ſeen the pompous appearance of that Rome ſaved by thy arm, and which thy reſpectable name had rendered more illuſtrious than all its conqueſts?

Ye gods, wouldſt thou have ſaid, "What is "become of thoſe thatched roofs, thoſe rural "dwellings, formerly inhabited by moderation "and virtue? What a fatal ſplendour has ſuc- "ceeded the Roman ſimplicity! What is this "ſtrange language? What are theſe effeminate "manners? What is the meaning of theſe ſtatues, "theſe pictures, theſe edifices? Fools, what have "you done? You, the maſters of nations, who "have rendered yourſelves the ſlaves of thoſe fri- "volous men whom you conquered! You are go- "verned by rhetoricians! Is it then to enrich ar- "chitects, painters, ſtatuaries, and buffoons, that "you have ſprinkled Greece and Aſia with your "blood! The ſpoils of Carthage are the prey of a "flute-player! Romans haſten to overturn theſe "amphitheatres, deſtroy this marble, burn theſe "paintings, drive away theſe ſlaves that ſubdue "you,

" you, and whoſe fatal arts corrupt you. Let other " hands grow illuſtrious by vain talents: the only " talent worthy Rome, is that of conquering the " world, and making virtue reign. When Cyneas " took our aſſembly for an aſſembly of Kings, he " was neither dazzled by a vain pomp, nor a " ſtudied elegance. He heard not that frivolous " eloquence, the ſtudy and delight of trifling men! " What was it then that Cyneas perceived ſo ma- " jeſtic? Oh, citizens, he ſaw a ſight which your " riches nor arts will never afford. The moſt " beautiful ſight that ever appeared under the Hea- " vens, was an aſſembly of two hundred virtuous " men, worthy to command Rome, and to govern " the earth."

A taſte for letters and the fine arts annihilates the love of our firſt duties, and of true glory.

When talents have once uſurped the honours due to virtue, every man endeavours to become agreeable, and none ſtudy to become worthy. Hence proceeds this other abſurdity, that men are only recompenſed for thoſe qualities, which do not depend on themſelves; for our talents are born with us, our virtues only are our own.

The love of philoſophy weakens all the ties of eſteem and benevolence, which unite men to ſociety; and that is, perhaps, the moſt dangerous evil, of which it is the cauſe. The charms of ſtudy ſoon render all other attachments inſipid: and far-

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ther, by continually obſerving mankind, the philoſopher learns to prize them according to their value; and it is difficult to have much affection for what we deſpiſe. He ſoon unites in his own perſon all the love that virtuous men ſhare among one another. His contempt for others is favourable to his pride; his ſelf-love augments in proportion to his indifference for the reſt of the univerſe. Family, country, are words to him devoid of meaning: he is neither parent, citizen, nor man; he is a philoſopher.

While the cultivation of ſciences withdraws, in ſome meaſure, the philoſopher from the croud, it engages there, in another ſenſe, that of the man of letters, but both in a manner equally prejudicial to virtue. Every man who devotes himſelf to the acquirement of agreeable ſciences, wiſhes to pleaſe and be admired; and he wiſhes to be admired more than others. He ſeems to think the public applauſe belongs to him alone. I would add, that he does every thing to obtain it, if he did not do ſtill more to hinder his competitors from ſharing it. Hence ariſe, on the one ſide, the refinements of taſte and politeneſs, baſe and vile flattery, ſeducing, inſiduous, and childiſh occupations, which, in time, corrupt the ſoul, and corrupt the heart; and on the other, jealouſies, rivalſhip, the hatred of renowned artiſts, perfidiouſneſs, calumny, impoſture, treachery, and all the meaneſt and moſt odious vices.

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If the philoſopher deſpiſes men, the artiſt ſoon makes himſelf deſpiſed by men, and both concur in rendering mankind deſpicable.

Knowledge is not made for men in general. He is for ever loſing himſelf in his reſearches; and if he ſometimes finds what he ſeeks, it is always prejudicial to him. He is born to act and think, but not to reflect; reflection only ſerves to make him unhappy, without making him better or wiſer; it makes him regret paſt bleſſings, and prevents his enjoying the preſent. It preſents future happineſs to ſeduce him by imagination, to torment him by deſires and future misfortunes, to make him feel them by anticipation. Study corrupts his morals, is prejudicial to his health, deſtroys his conſtitution, and often ſpoils his underſtanding; if it even taught him any thing, I ſhould ſtill think him very ill recompenſed.

I acknowledge there are ſome ſublime geniuſes, who can penetrate through the veil by which truth is concealed, ſome privileged ſouls capable of reſiſting the folly of vanity, the baſeneſs of jealouſy, and all the other paſſions which the love of letters produce. The little number of thoſe who are happy enough to unite all theſe qualities, are the light and honour of human nature. It is proper that theſe alone ſhould ſtudy for the benefit of the whole, and this conception confirms our rule; for

if

if every man was a Socrates, knowledge would not be hurtful to them, but unneceſſary.

The ſame things which have corrupted a people, ſerve ſometimes to prevent a greater corruption. It is thus that a perſon, who has deſtroyed his conſtitution by the indiſcreet uſe of medicines, is obliged to have recourſe again to phyſicians for the preſervation of his life. It is thus that arts and ſciences, after having matured vices, are neceſſary to hinder them from turning to crimes; they cover them, at leaſt, with a varniſh which prevents the poiſon from exhaling with freedom: they deſtroy virtue, although they preſerve an appearance of it; and they introduce in its place, politeneſs and decorum; to the fear of appearing wicked, they ſubſtitute that of appearing ridiculous.

Ye people, learn then that nature intended to preſerve you from learning, as a mother ſnatches a dangerous inſtrument from the hands of her child; that all the ſecrets ſhe conceals from you, are ſo many evils from which ſhe protects you; and that the difficulty you find in acquiring learning, is not the leaſt of her kindneſs.

LEARNED

LEARNED MEN.

THE greateſt part of learned men acquire their knowledge as children do. Vaſt erudition is leſs the reſult of a number of ideas, than of a number of figures; and we hardly ever call to mind any one of theſe things without ſeeing, at the ſame time, the *recto*, or *verſo*, of the page where we have read it, or the appearance under which it at firſt preſented itſelf to our view: ſuch was nearly the learning in faſhion the laſt century; that of this age is very different. The learned of the preſent day neither ſtudy nor obſerve, but dream, and they gravely preſent us with the dreams of ſome bad nights for philoſophy. I ſhall, perhaps, be told that I dream likewiſe. I acknowledge it, but with this difference—I give my dreams for dreams, leaving my readers to diſcover if they contain any thing uſeful to people awake.

If it be proper for great geniuſes to inſtruct the reſt of mankind, the vulgar muſt receive their inſtructions: if every one takes upon him to inſtruct, who will be left to liſten to them?—"Lame people," ſays Montague, "are unequal

"to

" to the exercifes of the body, and lame minds to " the exercife of the intellects." But in this learned age, we fee nothing but lame people teaching others to walk. The people receive the writings of philofophers to examine them, but not to inftruct themfelves; never was there feen fuch a number of ninies. Learning is to thofe that cultivate it a fort of coin, upon which they fet a great value, which, notwithftanding, is only conducive to happinefs, in proportion as we communicate it, and is only good while circulating. Take from our learned men the pleafure of making themfelves heard, they will be indifferent about the acquirement of it. They only collect opinions in their clofets, for the purpofe of difleminating them in public. They only wifh to be wife, in the eyes of mankind; and ftudy would be infipid to them, if they had no admirers. It is thus that Seneca himfelf thought—" If knowledge (fays he) was " given to me on conditions of not difplaying it, I " would not accept of it." Sublime philofophy! here is, then, thy rife!

When I fee a man taken with the love of all kinds of knowledge, fuffering himfelf to be feduced by their charms, and running from one to another, without knowing where to ftop, I think I fee a child upon the fands picking up fhells, and beginning to load himfelf: but tempted by others, which he afterwards obferves flinging away, and pick

picking up alternately, till quite overcome with number, and no longer knowing which to chooſe, or which to rejet, he leaves them all, and returns empty.

Thoſe great philoſophers, who think they poſſeſs, in an eminent degree, ſo many ſciences, would be much ſurpriſed to learn that they know nothing. But, for my own part, I ſhould be ſtill more ſurpriſed if theſe men, who know ſo many things, ſhould ever know that.

TALENTS.

TALENTS.

NATURE ſeems to have endowed men with different talents for their various departments, without regarding the rank in which they are born.—There are two things to be preferred to Talents; that is, morals and happineſs. Man is a being too noble to ſerve ſimply as the tool of others; and he ſhould never be employed in what is convenient to others, without conſulting what is moſt convenient to himſelf. For men are not made for ſituations, but ſituations for men: and in order to diſtribute things ſuitably, the greateſt regard muſt not be paid in their diſtribution, to the employment for which each man is fit, but to that which ſuits himſelf the beſt; in order to make him as good and happy as poſſible. It is never allowable to corrupt a human heart for the advantage of others, nor to make a raſcal, for the ſervice of honeſt people.

To purſue the bent of our genius, we muſt firſt be acquainted with it. Is it always an eaſy matter to diſtinguiſh the particular genius of men? If we have ſo much difficulty at an age when we generally chuſe for ourſelves, to diſtinguiſh thoſe of children whoſe propenſities we have moſt ſtudied, how will

he, whoſe education hath been neglected, be able to diſtinguiſh his own? Nothing is more equivocal, than the marks of inclination given in our infancy: it is often more the effect of imitation than genius; it depends more upon chance, than any natural propenſity, and even this apparent propenſity does not always point out the real diſpoſition.

True talents, and true genius, poſſeſs a certain ſimplicity which render them leſs diſquiet, leſs turbulent, and not ſo eager to diſplay themſelves, as an apparent and falſe genius, which is only a vain deſire of ſhining, without any poſſible means of ſucceeding. One hears a drum, and wants to be a general; another ſees people building, and fancies himſelf an architect. We are born with talents, only to riſe in the world, never to deſcend. Is this really the order of nature?

Suppoſing every man could diſtinguiſh what his genius inclined him moſt to, and wiſhed to purſue it, how many could do it? how many would be able to ſurmount unjuſt obſtacles? how many would vanquiſh unworthy competitors? One who feels his own weakneſs, calls to his aſſiſtance, artifice and cabal, which another, more confident of himſelf, diſdains.

So many eſtabliſhments for the encouragement of arts, inſtead of being uſeful, are prejudicial to them. By indiſcreetly multiplying the ſubjects, we confound them; true merit remains hidden in the

the croud, and the honours due to the moſt ſkilful, are beſtowed on the moſt intriguing.

If there exiſted a ſociety, where employments and ranks were exactly proportioned to the talents and the merit of individuals, every one might aſpire to the place he felt himſelf moſt capable of filling.

But we muſt conduct ourſelves by ſurer methods, and renounce the rewards due to talents, when the cultivation of the vileſt of all is the only road which leads to fortune.

It is difficult to believe, that all different talents ought to be made conſpicuous. It would in that caſe be requiſite, that the number of thoſe who poſſeſs them, were exactly proportioned to the wants of ſociety; and if we only allowed thoſe men to cultivate the earth, who poſſeſs in an eminent degree the talent of agriculture, or took from that employment, all thoſe who are perhaps better calculated for another, there would not remain labourers enough to its cultivation, and our ſubſiſtence.

The talents which men poſſeſs, are like virtues, medicines, which nature gives us to alleviate our miſeries, although her intention is, that we ſhould not want them. There are plants which poiſon, animals which devour, and talents which are pernicious. If it were neceſſary always to employ every thing, according to its chief property, we ſhould, perhaps, do more harm than good to mankind.

Thoſe nations which remain in their primitive ſimplicity and goodneſs, have no need of ſo many talents: they ſupport themſelves better by their ſimplicity, than others do by all induſtry; but by degrees, as they become corrupted, their talents begin to diſplay themſelves, to ſupply the place of thoſe virtues which they love, and to oblige even the wicked to be uſeful, whether they will or no.

TASTE.

TASTE.

THE GOOD is only the BEAUTIFUL put in action; they are intimately connected with each other, and they both ſpring from the ſame origin in nature. It follows from this, that Taſte is matured by the ſame means as wiſdom; and that a mind which feels ſenſibly the beauty of virtue, muſt be equally ſenſible to every ſpecies of beauty.

We exerciſe our ſight as we do our feelings, or rather an exquiſite ſight is only a delicate and fine feeling. A painter thus, when he ſees a beautiful landſcape or a fine picture, falls into extacies at the view of objects, which are not even perceived by a vulgar ſpectator. How many nameleſs things are there which Taſte alone decides?

Taſte is in ſome meaſure the microſcope of the judgement; it places the ſmalleſt objects within reach, and its operations begin to ſtop thoſe of the latter.

How then muſt we improve it? By exerciſing ourſelves in ſeeing, as well as in feeling; and in judging of what is beautiful, by inſpection, as of what is good, by feeling.

The more we endeavour to define Taſte, the more

we are miſled. Taſte is only the faculty of judging what pleaſes or diſpleaſes the generality of mankind. This is all we know of Taſte. It does not, however, follow, that there are more people of taſte than otherwiſe; for although the multitude judge wiſely of every object, there are few men who individually judge ſo wiſely; and although the general taſte conſtitutes good taſte, there are few people of good taſte; as there are few beautiful perſons, though the aſſemblage of the moſt common features conſtitutes beauty.

We muſt obſerve, that we are not here ſpeaking of what we love, becauſe it is uſeful to us; nor what we hate, becauſe it is hurtful. Taſte is only exerciſed upon things which are indifferent, or extends fartheſt to what concerns our amuſements, and not our real wants: to judge of theſe latter, taſte is not neceſſary, appetite and inclination alone ſuffice. This it is that renders the deciſions of mere taſte ſo difficult, and apparently ſo arbitrary. We ought likewiſe to diſtinguiſh its laws in morals as in phyſics. The principles of the latter appear totally inexplicable; but it is neceſſary to obſerve, that moral conſiderations enter into every thing that depends on imitation. Thus we define thoſe beauties which appear phyſical, but which are not really ſo. I ſhall add, that Taſte has local rules, which makes it in a thouſand things dependant on climate, morals, government, and inſtitutions; and that it has others which

which depend on age, ſex, and character; and in ſuch matters we muſt not diſpute on taſte.

Taſte is natural to all men; but they have not all an equal ſhare of it; neither does it ſhew itſelf equally in every perſon; and it is liable to change in every body, through different cauſes. The degree of taſte which we poſſeſs, depends much upon the refinement of our feelings; its culture, and form to the ſocieties in which we have lived. Firſt, it is neceſſary to live in large ſocieties, to have an opportunity of making many compariſons: ſecondly, ſocieties of idleneſs and pleaſure are neceſſary; for in thoſe of buſineſs, intereſt, and not pleaſure, engroſſes attention: thirdly, ſocieties where there is not much inequality; where the tyranny of opinion is moderate, and where luxury reigns more than vanity; for, in the oppoſite caſe, faſhion ſtifles taſte, and the object of ſearch is not that of pleaſure but of diſtinction.

In this latter caſe, it is no longer a juſt remark, that the beſt taſte, is that of the majority. Why ſo?—Becauſe its object changed, the multitude have no longer a judgement of their own; and they ſuffer their judgement to be guided by thoſe whom they fancy more enlightened than themſelves.—They do not approve what is good, but what others have approved. Let every man, at all times, judge for himſelf; and then what is moſt agreeable in itſelf, will always carry the moſt votes.

Every thing beautiful in the works of men, is the effects of imitation: all true models of taſte are found in nature. The more we deviate from our inſtructor, the leſs beautiful are our works. We then deduce our models from objects which we love; and the beauties of fancy, when ſubject to caprice and opinion, are made ſubſervient to the pleaſures of our leaders.

The directors of our taſte are artiſts, the great, and the opulent; and theſe are directed by inſtinct and vanity: the latter, to diſplay their riches, and the others, in order to profit by it, emulate each other in the invention of new modes of expence.—By theſe means, mighty Luxury eſtabliſhes her empire, and makes us love what is rare and coſtly.—Then, what is ſtiled beautiful, far from imitating nature, is only thought ſo, by running counter to it. It is thus that luxury and bad taſte are inſeparable. Wherever taſte is expenſive, it is falſe.

It is particularly in the commerce of the ſexes, that our taſte, whether good or bad, is formed. Its cultivation is a neceſſary effect of the object of that intercourſe: but the facility of enjoyment leſſens the deſire of pleaſing; taſte of courſe degenerates: and this appears to me to be one of the ſtrongeſt reaſons, why good taſte is accompanied by good morals.

Taſte is often corrupted by an extreme delicacy, which makes us ſenſible of trifles, unperceived by the generality of mankind. This delicacy leads us

to

to a ſpirit of diſcuſſion; for the more we ſubtilize objects, the more they multiply. This ſubtilty renders our feelings more delicate, but leſs uniform. There are, then, as many taſtes formed, as there are perſons. In diſputing to which the preference is due, philoſophy and knowledge are improved; and it is thus that we learn to think ſhrewd obſervations can only be made by people who poſſeſs an extenſive knowledge of the world, as they are the leaſt obvious, and people who are not much accuſtomed to large ſocieties, turn all their attention to the more ſtriking features.

There is not now, perhaps, a civilized place in the world, where taſte in general is more depraved, than at Paris. It is, nevertheleſs, in this capital, that good taſte is cultivated; and there appear few books, eſteemed in Europe, whoſe authors have not been in Paris to improve their taſte. Thoſe who imagine it only neceſſary to read the books which are written there, are miſtaken: there is a great deal more to be learnt from the converſation of authors, than from their books; and even authors are not thoſe from whom we learn the moſt. It is the ſpirit of ſocieties that unfolds a thinking mind, and extends our diſcernment as far as it can go. If you have the leaſt ſpark of genius, go and ſpend a year at Paris; you will ſoon be all that you ever will, or you will never be any thing.

There is a certain ſimplicity of taſte, which goes to the heart, and which is only to be found in the writings of the ancients. We find them replete with knowledge and ſound judgement, as well in treating of rhetoric, poetry, and in every ſpecies of literature, as in hiſtory itſelf. Our authors, on the contrary, ſay a great deal, but mean very little. To make their judgement perpetual law, is not the method to form ours.

The difference of the ancient and modern taſtes, is diſcernible in all their works, even to their very tombs. Ours are covered with encomiums; on theirs were engraved facts.

"*Ita viator heroem calcas.*"

"Stop, traveller, thou treadſt upon a hero."

If I had found this epitaph upon an antique monument, I ſhould have immediately gueſſed that it was modern; for nothing is ſo common as heroes among us; but among the ancients they were rare. Inſtead of ſaying a man was a hero, they would have told what he had done to be one. With the epitaph of this hero, compare that of the effeminate Sardanapalus:

"I have built Tarſus and Anchiales in a day, and now I am dead."

Which of theſe, in your opinion, is moſt expreſſive? Our monumental ſtyle, with all its bom-

baſt,

baſt, is only fit to extol pigmies. The ancients ſhewed men as they were, and one might perceive that they were men. Xenophon honoured the memory of ſome warriors, killed by treachery, in the retreat of the ten thouſand. "They died," ſaid he, "irreproachable in war and friendſhip!" That is all: but conſider, in this ſhort and ſimple eulogy, ſentiments which overflowed the author's heart. Woe to him who does not feel this enchanting.—Theſe words were engraved on a monument at the Straits of Thermopylæ: "Traveller, go tell at "Sparta, that we died here, in obedience to her "ſacred laws."

We may eaſily perceive that the Academy of Inſcriptions did not compoſe this.

IMAGINATION.

THE immediate powers of ſenſe are feeble and limited; it is through the intervals of Imagination that they commit their greateſt devaſtations; for Imagination irritates our deſires, by ornamenting their objects with more attractions than nature ever gave them: it ſhamefully unveils to the eye, what is beheld not only as naked, but as before having been covered.

There is no dreſs, though ever ſo modeſt, through which a look, inflamed by imagination, will not carry deſire. A Chineſe girl, only advancing the end of her foot covered, will do more execution at Pekin, than the moſt beautiful girl would have done, dancing quite naked upon the banks of the Taygetus.

Wretched is he who has nothing left to wiſh for! He loſes in a manner all that he poſſeſſes.—We enjoy much leſs what we obtain, than what we hope for; and we are only happy before being happy. In fact, man, ardent, and limited, made to deſire every thing, and obtain little, has received from Heaven a conſolatry power, which brings every thing within his reach that he deſires, ſubmits

mits it to his imagination; renders it preſent and perceptible; and in a manner ſurrenders every thing up to his wiſhes; and in order to render theſe imaginary properties ſtill more ſeducing, modifies them according to his deſires. But all this faſcination diſappears before the real object in the eyes of the poſſeſſor. We never figure to ourſelves what we ſee; imagination no longer decorates what we poſſeſs; the illuſion ceaſes, when enjoyment takes place. In every thing, habit deſtroys imagination; new objects only re-kindle it. In thoſe which we ſee every day, it is no longer imagination which acts, but memory; and from thence ariſes the maxim, *ab aſſuetis non fit paſſio**; for it is only by the fire of imagination that the paſſions are kindled.

The recollection of thoſe objects which have made an impreſſion upon us, as well as the ideas which we have acquired, purſue us into our retirement, and people it, againſt our inclination, with images far more ſeducing than the objects themſelves, and renders ſolitude as fatal to thoſe who carry theſe ideas with them, as it is uſeful to him who can preſerve himſelf always alone. When the imagination is once defiled, every thing becomes a matter of ſhame; when we have nothing

* Paſſion does not ariſe from objects to which we are accuſtomed.

left

left good, but the outside, we redouble our efforts to preserve it. Imagination, which decorates our desires, abandons them in the possession. Except the self existent Being, there is nothing beautiful, but that which is imaginary.

The existence of finite beings is so poor and limited, that when we only see what really is, we are never affected. Fantasy adorns real objects; and if imagination adds not a charm to what strikes us, the barren pleasure which we take in it is limited to our organs, and always leaves the heart cold.

Although it be a general custom to announce melancholy events by degrees, there are some lively and passionate imaginations, who, from a single word, immediately foresee the worst, with whom it is better to follow a different rule, and overwhelm them at once, in order to administer consolations afterwards.

Opinion,

Opinion, Foreſight.

OPINION, the queen of the world, is not under the power of kings; they themſelves are her chief ſlaves.

To yield nothing to Opinion, we muſt yield nothing to authority; the greateſt part of our errors proceed much leſs from ourſelves, than from others. Nothing renders us more inſenſible to raillery, than to be above opinion.

Oh, Foreſight! thou who inceſſantly carrieſt us beyond ourſelves, and often placeſt us where we ſhall never arrive, thou art the true ſource of all miſeries! What madneſs, for a being, ſo tranſitory as man, to be for ever gazing at a diſtant futurity, that arrives ſo ſeldom, and to neglect the preſent, of which he is ſure! A madneſs, the more fatal, as it inceſſantly increaſes with age; and as old people, always diſtruſtful, avaricious, and full of foreſight, love better to deprive themſelves of the needful to-day, than to want it a hundred years hence. Thus, every thing is a tie to us; we link ourſelves to every thing; times, places, men, things,

things, all that is, and all that may be, we make of importance. Our individual exiſtence becomes the leaſt conſideration. Every one extends himſelf, in a manner, over the whole earth, and becomes ſenſible upon all this great ſurface.—Is it then to be wondered at, that our pains are increaſed in every point, through which we may be wounded? How many princes afflict themſelves with the loſs of a country they have never ſeen? How many merchants, if you ſpeak of India, will bewail themſelves at Paris?

Is it nature that carries men thus beyond themſelves? Is it ſhe who orders every man to learn his fate from others, and ſometimes to be inſtructed of it the laſt? Is it that we may die happy or miſerable, without having ever known any thing of the matter? I ſee a man freſh, gay, vigorous, and in good health; his preſence inſpires joy, his eyes announce contentment and peace; he carries with him the picture of happineſs. The poſt brings a letter; the happy man looks at it; it is directed to him; he opens and reads it: that inſtant his air changes, he becomes pale, and falls motionleſs to the ground. When come to himſelf, he is agitated; he weeps, he groans, he tears his hair; he makes the air reſound with his cries; he ſeems as if attacked with dreadful convulſions.——Ah, fooliſh man! What harm has that paper done thee?

thee? what limb has it deprived thee of? what crime has it made thee commit? In ſhort, what has it changed in thee, to reduce thee to the ſtate I now ſee thee in?

If this letter had been loſt, or if ſome charitable being had flung it in the fire, the fate of this mortal, both happy and unhappy at the ſame time, would, methinks, have been a ſtrange problem — His misfortune, you will ſay, was real. Very true; but he did not feel it. His happineſs was imaginary. I underſtand you; health, gaiety, happineſs, peace of mind, are merely viſionary. We no longer exiſt, where we are not. Is it worth while to have ſo great a dread of death, provided that in which we live ſtill exiſts?

Oh, man! confine thy exiſtence within thyſelf, and thou wilt be no longer miſerable. Remain in the place which nature aſſigns thee in the chain of beings, and nothing will have power to make thee quit it.

Rebel not againſt the hard law of neceſſity; waſte not, in trying to reſiſt it, that ſtrength which nature did not give thee to extend or prolong thy exiſtence; but ſimply to preſerve it as he pleaſes, and ſo long as he pleaſes. Thy liberty, thy power, extend no farther than thy natural ſtrength; all the reſt is only ſlavery, illuſion, and faſcination.

Even

Even power and dominion are ſervile, when they are attached to opinion: for you are ſubſervient to the prejudices of thoſe men, you govern by prejudices. To manage them as you pleaſe, you muſt ſuffer yourſelf to be managed as they pleaſe.

If they change their way of thinking, you muſt change your way of acting. Thoſe about you need only to know how to govern the opinions of the people you fancy you govern, or of the favourites that lead you, or thoſe of your family, or your own. Theſe viziers, theſe courtiers, theſe prieſts, theſe ſoldiers, theſe valets, theſe frivolous people, and even children, if you were a Themiſtocles in genius, would lead you as a child, amidſt your legions. Do what you will, your real authority will never extend farther than your real faculties; ſo ſoon as you ſee with other's eyes, their will muſt be your's.

My people are my ſubjects! ſayſt thou, haughtily. Be it ſo; but what art thou? The ſubject of thy miniſters. And thy miniſters themſelves, what are they? The ſubjects of their ſecretaries, of their miſtreſſes, the valets of their valets: take all, uſurp every thing, ſcatter money abroad by handfuls; raiſe batteries of cannons; ſet up gibbets and racks; publiſh laws and edicts; multiply the number of ſpies, ſoldiers, executioners, priſons, and chains. Poor little man! What avails all this? Thou

wilt

wilt neither be better ſerved, nor leſs deceived, nor more abſolute. Thou may'ſt always ſay, I will, but thou muſt always follow the will of others.

The

The SENSES.

OUR ſenſes are the firſt faculties, which are faſhioned, and arrive at perfection in us. And the firſt which we ought to cultivate – and yet are thoſe which we forget, or at leaſt which we neglect the moſt.

The proper exerciſe of our ſenſes, is not only to make uſe of them, but to learn by them, how to judge properly. For we neither know how to feel, how to touch, how to ſee, nor how to hear, but as we have been taught.

The beſt way of acquiring a right judgement, is to ſimplify our experiments; and to acquire a faculty of even diſpenſing with them, without falling into errors; from whence it follows, that after having often proved, the relation of our ſenſes, one by another, we muſt ſtill learn to prove the relation of each ſenſe by itſelf; without being forced to have recourſe to any other ſenſe; each ſenſation will then become an idea, and this idea will always be conformable to truth.

We are not equally maſters of the uſe of all our ſenſes. There is one, namely, feeling, the action of which is not ſuſpended during the time of our being

being awake. It has been ſpread over the whole ſurface of our bodies, as an everlaſting guard to warn us againſt all that might hurt us. It is alſo of this ſenſe though againſt our inclination, of which we firſt acquire experience, and conſequently, that to which we have the leaſt occaſion to give a particular culture. We obſerve, notwithſtanding, that the feeling of blind men is ſurer and more delicate than ours; becauſe, being no longer guided by ſight, they are forced to learn to draw ſolely from this firſt ſenſe, the judgement with which we are furniſhed by the others.

Although feeling is of all our ſenſes, that which is the oftenеſt exerciſed, its judgement always remains more imperfect, and unpoliſhed, than that of any other; becauſe we continually blend with its uſe, that of ſight, and the eye, ſeizing its object ſooner than the hand, the mind forms its judgement almoſt always without it. In revenge, the judgements of feeling are the moſt certain, preciſely becauſe they are the moſt limited. For, extending no farther than our hands can reach, feeling reforms the blunders of the other ſenſes, which dart afar upon objects that they hardly perceive: whereas, all that the touch perceives, it perceives right. Add to this, that by uniting when we pleaſe the force of the muſcles to the action of the nerves, we unite by a ſimultaneous ſenſation to the judgement of the temperature,

bulk, and figure, the judgement of weight and ſolidity. Thus the touch being of all our ſenſes that which informs us beſt, of the impreſſions, which other bodies make on ours, it is that which we uſe oftenest, and which gives us moſt readily the knowledge neceſſary for our preſervation.

As much as the touch confines its operations to man, ſo much the ſight extends it far beyond him. This circumſtance renders the latter deceitful: at one glance of the eye, a man takes in the half of the horizon. Among that multitude of ſimultaneous ſenſations, and judgements then excited, how can he avoid being deceived by ſome of them. Thus, the ſight is the moſt faulty of all our ſenſes; preciſely, becauſe it is the moſt extenſive; and becauſe, getting far before the reſt, its operations are too haſty and great, to be eaſily ſatisfied by the reſt. Moreover, even the deceptions of preſpective are neceſſary for us to acquire the knowledge of extenſion, and to compare its parts. Without falſe appearances we could ſee nothing afar; without the gradation of bulk and light, we could eſtimate no diſtance, or rather there would be none for us to eſtimate. Of two trees of an equal ſize, if the one which is a hundred paces from us, appears as large and as diſtinct as the one which is a thouſand, we will place them ſide by ſide. If we perceived all the dimenſions of objects

in their true meaſure, every thing would be in contact with our eyes.

The ſenſe of ſight, and that of touch, may be equally exerciſed upon bodies in motion, and bodies at reſt; but as there is a concuſſion of the atmoſphere neceſſary to that of hearing, it is only thoſe bodies that are in motion which make a ſound or noiſe, and if every thing was ſtill, we ſhould hear nothing: In the night, therefore, when we have no occaſion to move about any more than we pleaſe, and we have of courſe, nothing to fear, but from thoſe bodies that are in motion. But, on account of theſe, it is neceſſary to make uſe of our ſenſe of hearing, in order to judge by the ſenſation that ſtrikes, whether the body which cauſes it, be little or big, at a diſtance or near, and in gentle or in violent motion. The air, in a ſtate of agitation, is ſubject to repercuſſion or reflection, which, producing an echo, repeat the ſenſation, and make the agitated and ſonorous body audible in another place than that in which it is. If in a plain or valley we put our ear to the ground, we hear the voice of men, and the tread of horſes, at a much greater diſtance than we could if we remained upright.

We are poſſeſſed of an organ which correſponds to that of hearing, namely, voice; but we have none which anſwers to ſight, nor do we return colours, as we do ſounds. This furniſhes us with additional means of cultivating the firſt ſenſe, through

through exercising the active and passive organs one by the other. We should either be starved to death or poisoned, if we were obliged to wait for the food that is proper for us, until experience had taught us to know and to chuse it: but the Supreme Being who has made the gratification of sensible beings an instrument of their preservation, instructs us by what pleases our palates, what is good for our stomachs. There is not, naturally, any better physician for man than his own appetite; and considering it in its primitive state, I have no doubt but the food which man finds the most palatable, and agreeable, is the most wholesome.

Further, the divine author of all things, not only supplies those wants he has given us, but those which we create to ourselves; and, in order always to make our desires keep pace with our wants, he makes our tastes vary with our manner of living. The farther we depart from the state of nature, the more we lose our natural taste: or rather habit forms a second nature, which supplies so well the place of the former, that none of us remember it. It follows from this, that the most natural tastes, must likewise be the most simple: for these are the most susceptible of change; whereas, when once they are sharpened, and irritated by our fancies, they assume a form which is invariable. A man who is not of any particular country, will easily habituate himself to the customs of any:

any: but the man of one country can never become that of another.

Among all our various ſenſations, that which generally affects us the moſt, is taſte. Agreeably to the conſtitution of nature, by which it is of more conſequence to us, to form a proper judgement of thoſe ſubſtances which form a part of our own, than of thoſe which only ſurround it. Many things are indifferent to the touch, the hearing, and the ſight, but there is hardly any thing indifferent to the taſte. Again, the activity of this ſenſe is entirely phyſical and material: it is the only one which has no connection with the imagination, at leaſt it is of all our ſenſes, that into the ſenſations of which, imagination enters the leaſt: whereas, imagination and imitation often mix ſomething moral with the impreſſions of all the reſt: for which reaſon, tender and ſuſceptible hearts, paſſionate and really feeling diſpoſitions, which are eaſily affected by the other ſenſes, partake very little of this.

Smell is to taſte, what ſight is to touch: it anticipates and foretels in what manner ſuch and ſuch ſubſtances muſt affect it, and diſpoſes it to ſeek or avoid them according to the impreſſion it has received beforehand.

Smelling is the ſenſe of the imagination; by increaſing the tenſion of the nerves, it makes a forcible impreſſion on the brain: for this reaſon, it

revives the conſtitution for a little while, but exhauſts it in the end. Its effects in love are well known. The ſweet perfume of a dreſſing room is not ſo weak a ſnare as is generally thought, and I know not whether we ſhould congratulate or pity the unfeeling ſage, who was never ſenſible of palpitation or ſigh, when he inhaled the fragrance of the flower that adorned his miſtreſs's breaſt.

We may admit a ſixth ſenſe called common ſenſe, not ſo much becauſe it is common to every man, as that it proceeds from the well-regulated uſe of all the other ſenſes, and that it informs us of the nature of things, by the concurrence of all their appearances. This ſenſe, conſequently, has no particular organ? it exiſts only in the brain, and its ſenſations purely internal, are called preception or ideas. It is by the number of theſe ideas, that the extent of our knowledge is meaſured: it is their clearneſs and perſpicuity, which indicates the ſolidity of the underſtanding. It is the art of comparing them one by the other, that I call human reaſon: what I denominate ſenſitive or puerile reaſon, is that which conſiſts in forming ſimple ideas, by the concurrence of ſeveral ſenſations: and what I call intellectual or human reaſon, conſiſts in forming complete ideas, by the combination of ſeveral ſimple ideas.

IDEAS.

IDEAS.

THE manner of forming ideas is what characterizes the human underſtanding: that underſtanding, which forms its ideas upon real affinities and relations, only is ſolid: that which is ſatisfied with appearances, is ſuperficial: that which ſees things as they really are, is juſt: that which puts a wrong value on them is falſe. He who conjures up imaginary accuſations, which are neither apparent nor real, is a fool. He who never draws compariſons is an ideot. A diſpoſition to compel ideas, and diſcover new relations, is what marks, according to the different degree of its ſtrength, a greater or leſs ſhare of underſtanding. Simple ideas are only ſenſations brought together by means of compariſon. In ſimple, as well as in complex ſenſations, there is an exerciſe of judgement that I call a ſimple idea. In ſenſation, judgement is purely paſſive; it affirms that we feel, what we feel. In preception, or idea, the judgement is active; it unfolds, compares, and determines, concerning the

relations of things which is never done by ſenſe. There lies all the difference; but that is very great. Nature never deceives us; when we are deceived, it is always by ourſelves.

LAN-

LANGUAGES and ACCENTS.

LANGUAGES, in changing their form, modify likewiſe the ideas which they repreſent. The manner of thinking is formed by language. Ideas take the complection of idioms: reaſon alone is general. Genius, or wit, aſſumes a particular form, in every language: a difference which may very likely be partly either the cauſe or the effect of national character; and what ſeems to confirm this conjecture is, that, among all the nations of the world, language follows the change of morals, and is either corrupted, or remains pure as they do. To learn languages alone is of little conſequence; their uſe is not ſo important as is generally theught: but the ſtudy of languages leads to that of general grammar. We muſt learn Latin to know French: we muſt ſtudy and compare both, to underſtand the rules of the art of ſpeaking. French is ſaid to be the chaſteſt of all languages. I think it the moſt impure; for it does not appear to me that the chaſtity of a language conſiſts in the ingenious evaſions of indelicate expreſſions, but in having none. In ſhort, in order to avoid, we

muſt think on them; there is no language in which it is more difficult to avoid the indency of ambiguous expreſſions, than the French; the reader being more prone and alert in diſcovering improper meanings, than the writer in avoiding them, is offended and ſtartled, at every thing. How is it poſſible for thoſe things which paſs through impure ears not to be defiled? On the contrary, among a people of good morals, there are always proper terms for every thing; and theſe terms are always modeſt, becauſe they are employed modeſtly. It is impoſſible to conceive a language more modeſt than that of the Bible, and that becauſe it is the moſt ſimple. To render the ſame things immodeſt, it is ſufficient to tranſlate them into French.

To pique ourſelves upon not making uſe of emphaſis, is totally deſtroying the grace and energy of converſation: emphaſis is the ſoul of diſcourſe; it gives it ſentiment and truth. Emphaſis ſpeaks more truly than words. It is from the cuſtom of ſaying every thing in the ſame tone of voice that the practice has ariſen of ridiculing people without their being conſcious of it.

When emphaſis is proſcribed we find a ridiculous and affected manner of pronouncing ſubſtituted in its place, ſubject to faſhion, ſuch as we remark particularly in young courtiers. This affectation

fectation of ſpeech and manner is what generally renders the manner of the French diſguſting and diſagreeable to other nations. Inſtead of giving any emphaſis to their diſcourſe, they give action—this is not the method of prepoſſeſſing people in their favour.

SIGNS.

SIGNS.

ONE of the great errors of the preſent age is that of being too abſtracted in our reaſoning, as if men were entirely made up of intelligence. By neglecting the language of ſigns, which ſpeak to the imagination, we have loſt the moſt energetic of all languages. The impreſſions that words make are always ſlight, and we ſpeak to the heart much more forcibly by the eyes than by the ears. In our attempts to bring every thing to the bar of abſtracted reaſoning, we reduce our precepts to words, but not to actions. Mere reaſon is not an active faculty: it ſometimes reſtrains, but hardly ever excites; and never inſpires great actions. To be always reaſoning is the folly of little minds. Great minds uſe a very different language: the language that perſuades and ſtimulates to action.

In modern times men have no power over one another but what ariſes from force, or intereſt: the ancients could do more by perſuaſion, and managing the feelings of the heart, becauſe they did not neglect the language of ſigns. All their contracts were made and ratified with great ſolemnity, in order to render them inviolable.

Before

Before the eſtabliſhment of civil power, the gods were the magiſtrates of men: it was before them that individuals made their treaties, their alliances, or promiſes. The ſurface of the earth was the book which kept their records. Rocks, trees, and pieces of ſtone, conſecrated by theſe acts, and rendered ſacred to uncivilized people, were the leaves of this book, for ever open to all eyes. The wells dug in ratification of oaths, the wells of life and ſight, the old oak of Mamre, the hill of the covenant: theſe were the rude, but auguſt, monuments of the ſacred nature of contracts. No ſacrilegious hand ever dared to profane theſe monuments, and the faith of men was better ſecured by theſe dumb witneſſes, than it is now-a-days by all the vain rigour of the laws. In artificial governments, the auguſt apparel of royalty awed the ſubjects. External marks of dignity, thrones, ſceptres, purple robes, crowns, and diadems, were held ſacred. Theſe reſpected badges of honour rendered the man reſpectable that was inveſted with them: without ſoldiers, and without threats, he no ſooner ſpoke than he was obeyed.

The Romiſh clergy have very judiciouſly preſerved theſe badges of dignity and power, and, after their example, ſome republicks; among others, that of Venice. For this reaſon, the Venetian government, notwithſtanding the fall of that ſtate, ſtill enjoys, under the decorations of its ancient majeſty,

majeſty, all the affection and all the adoration of the people: and, after the Pope, ornamented with his Tiara, there is, perhaps, no King, nor Potentate, nor man, ſo reſpected in the world as the Doge of Venice, without power or authority, and ornamented with a woman's cap, under his ducal coronet. The ceremony of the Bucentaur, which excites the laughter of ſo many ſuperficial fools, would alone animate the people of Venice to ſpill the laſt drop of their blood in ſupport of their tyrannical government. It is wonderful what the ancients effected by the power of eloquence; but this eloquence conſiſted not in ſtudied harangues. The orators were never more perſuaſive than when they ſpoke the leaſt. The moſt energetic diſcourſes were not expreſſed by words, but by ſigns. The repreſentation of real objects awakens the imagination, excites curioſity, and holds the mind in ſuſpence concerning what is going to be ſaid; but this repreſentation often ſays every thing. Did not Thraſibulus, and Tarquin cutting off the heads of poppies, Alexander holding his ſeal to the mouth of his favourite Diogenes walking before Zeno, ſpeak more eloquently than if they had made long diſcourſes? What circumlocution would have conveyed the meaning of theſe actions in ſo forcible a manner?

Darius, when entering Scythia with his army, received from the King of the Scythians a bird, a frog,

frog, a mouſe, and five arrows. The ambaſſador depoſited his preſent, and returned without uttering a ſingle word. This man, in our days, would have paſſed for a fool. But this terrible harangue, however, was underſtood; and Darius returned to his own country with all imaginable ſpeed. Had he ſent a letter, or verbal meſſage, the more menacing they had been, the leſs fear they would have produced. They would have been conſidered as vain boaſts, at which Darius would only have laughed.

How attentive were the Romans to the language of ſigns! They had different dreſſes ſuitable to different ages and conditions. They had their *toga*, their mantles, and their numerous ornaments of diſtinction; they had chains, lictors, faſces, axes, crowns of gold, of herbage, of leaves, orations, and triumphs: all with them was parade and ceremony, and every thing made an impreſſion upon the hearts of the citizens. It was of conſequence to the ſtate that the people ſhould aſſemble in one place rather than in another; that they ſhould, or ſhould not, be in view of the capitol; that they were, or were not, turned towards the ſenate; that they deliberated one day in preference to another. The perſons accuſed of crimes, and the candidates for favour, wore different dreſſes. The warriors boaſted not of their exploits; they ſhewed their wounds.

wounds. Let us ſuppoſe one of our modern orators, after the aſſaſſination of Ceſar, endeavouring to excite the people to revenge his death; uſing all his eloquence to give a pathetic deſcription of his bleeding wounds, and lifeleſs corps! Mark Antony, though a great orator, ſaid not a word of all this: he only cauſed the body to be ſhewn. What rhetoric!

END OF VOL. I.

ERRATUM.

In page 160, line 18, after *terminates with the first blood that is drawn*, add the following:

In France, there are two kinds of duels; one, which ceases when the first blood is drawn; and one, where the combatants fight a *toute outrance*; i. e. till one or both are killed.

BINDING DEPT. MAY 25 1959